Pipes

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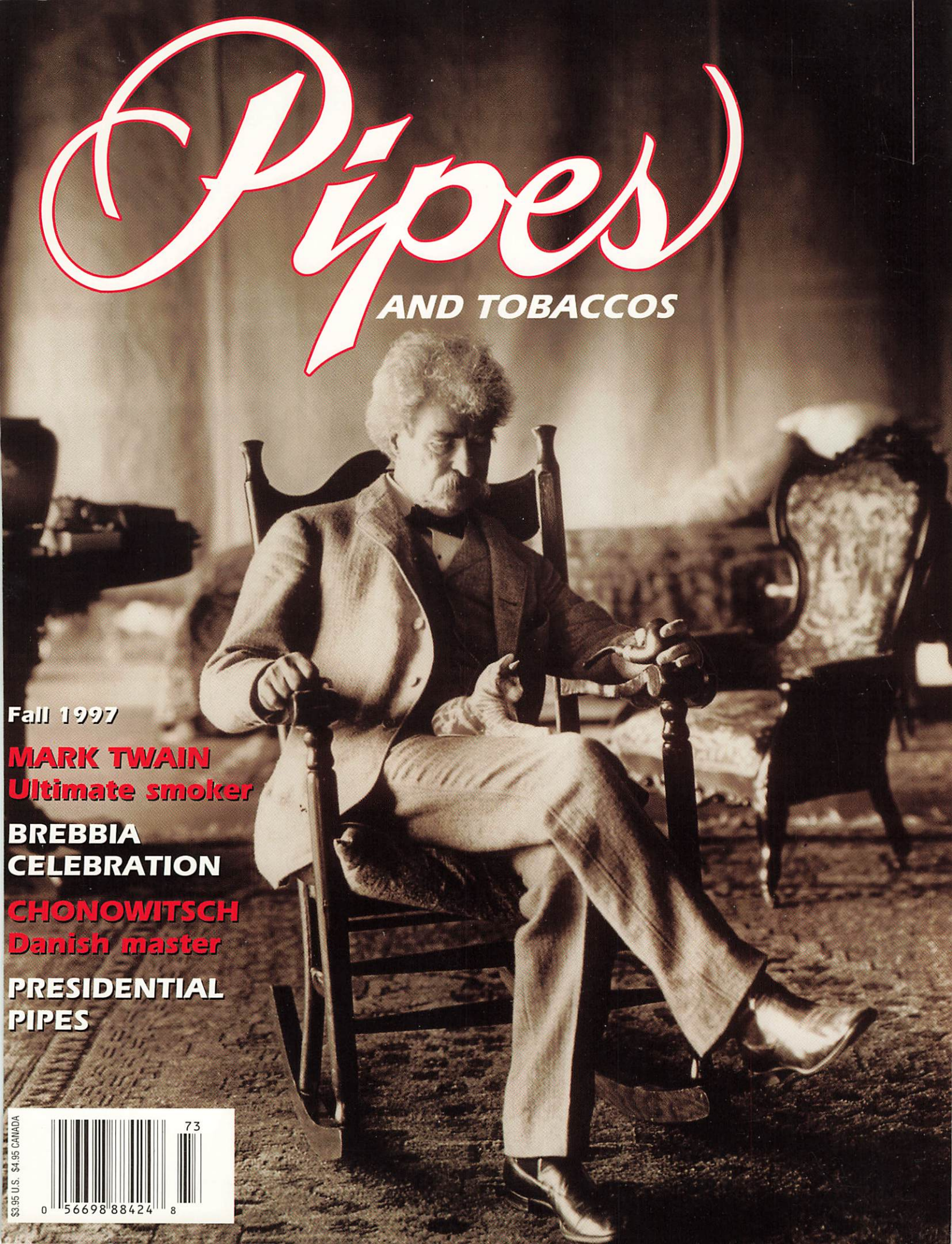

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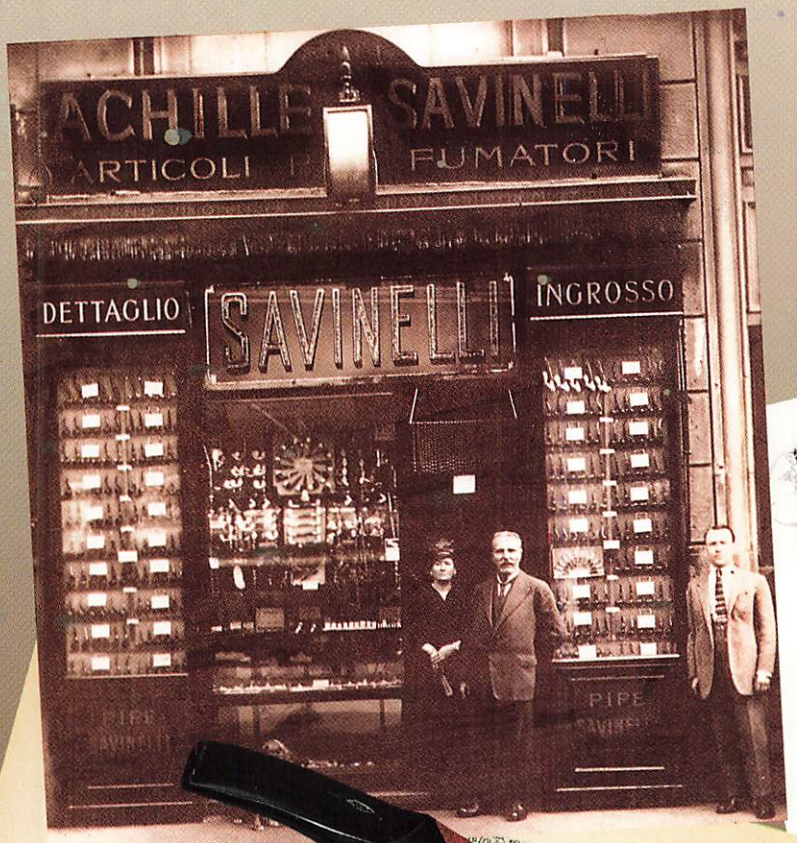

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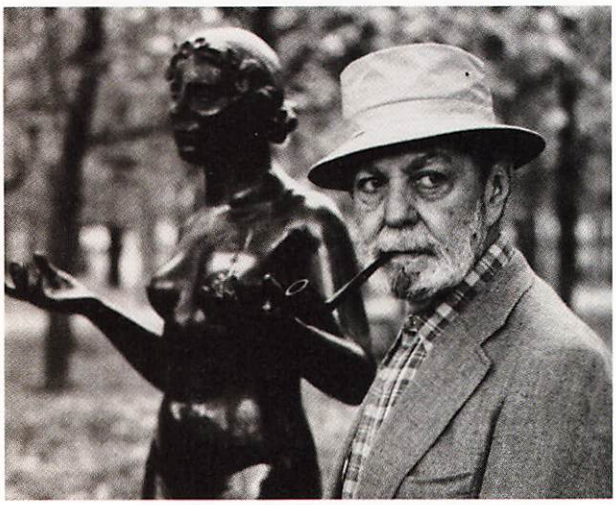

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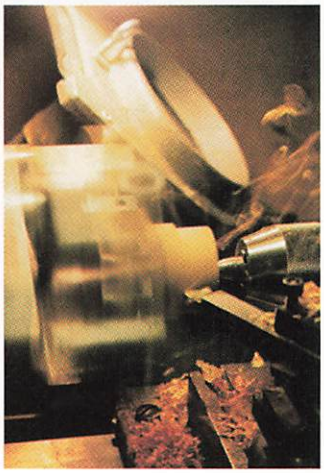
18 **Civil Discourse**
Shelby Foote, novelist, Civil War historian and pipe smoker, acted as technical advisor for the award-winning television documentary, "The Civil War." In this *P&T* interview, Foote speaks of his 51 years as a writer, and relates some fascinating details of pipe smoking in the Civil War.

26 **Mental model guides Danish master**
By finding the exact piece of briar needed to correspond to a design idea—instead of trying to find ideas to match the wood at hand—Jess Chonowitsch creates unpretentious pipes of stunningly exquisite simplicity.



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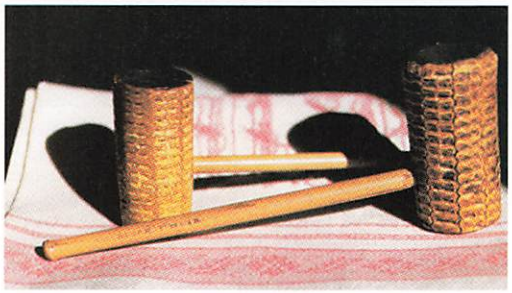
34 **Mark Twain**
Part legend, part mortal, all smoker. If you think the last century was a more smoker-tolerant time than today, you may be surprised. Even Mark Twain had to endure anti-smokers seeking to curtail the tobacco use that helped inspire him in writing the greatest of American literature.

44 **Pipe Brebbia**
Brebbia's spirit of innovation has yielded a method for drilling curved smoke holes. But that is not surprising, given the foresight that motivated this company to rely on its own power plant and excel while other Italian industries floundered in the ruin left by World War II.



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56 **Presidential Pipes**
Although the various organizations against smoking and other personal freedoms would hate to admit it, our forefathers actually smoked pipes and were still able to run the country. See some of the pipes that comforted America's leaders as they fostered the nation's future.

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Preserve the Twain Project!

Here's something new: a sepia tone cover photo. No, we're not trying to save money. The photo was taken before color, in 1903. Like many from the same time period, this photo has been treated with a sepia tone process—a brown wash used to soften the "edges" of black and white photos. It's ironic that Mark Twain, one of the most colorful personalities in history, now exists only in black and white or sepia images.

The Twain story is one we have been working on for some time. Associate editor Chuck Stanion visited Twain museums in Hannibal, Missouri and Hartford, Connecticut, the cities where Samuel Clemens lived for the longest durations, to research the story. Chuck has been a Twain enthusiast since age 11. Instead of accepting a position on a local newspaper, the day after he graduated from college Chuck went to New Orleans and took a job as a dishwasher on the Mississippi Queen, a passenger paddlewheeler, so he could see the river as Twain described it in "Life on the Mississippi." He still maintains that enthusiasm, and has channeled it into the article at hand.

The Twain museums were of immense help in researching the article, the second part of which will appear in our next issue. Also of immeasurable value were the publications of The Mark Twain Project at The Bancroft Library in Berkeley, California.

The Mark Twain Project houses letters, manuscripts, dictations, notebooks, photographs, and literary fragments that are essential to scholars, and regularly publishes definitive versions of those works, as well as previously unpublished pieces. The tight focus of our article—Twain's pipe smoking—would have been impossible without the Mark Twain Project's ongoing publication of Twain's letters and notebooks. While partially funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Project is losing money, and its resources are in danger of being warehoused.

Mark Twain is a national treasure, and it would be a national disgrace to allow his currently unpublished works to sit in boxes, unavailable to the public. *P&T* invites you to join us in supporting this vital project. Tax deductible donations may be sent to The Friends of the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-6000.

Dayton H. Matlick

Stories in progress:

Germain & Son
Mark Twain, part II
Savinelli
Christmas Gift Ideas
Castello

Corrections:

Our Summer issue incorrectly listed Stemco-Pimo's telephone number. The correct number is 802.362.3371. We also apologize for misspelling Richard Esserman's name on page 78.

Vol. 2, No.3, Fall 1997

64 **Easy Draw**
The problem with most pipes today is that they are not drilled properly for the perfect smoking experience. Richard Newcombe's theory of smoke hole geometry may help you modify your pipe from an average to a superb smoke.

70 **Fine Tobaccos**
You know it's grown on farms, and that it is eventually blended to become your favorite mixture. But if you truly love your tobacco, you'll want to learn more about the many stops it makes on its way to your pipe.

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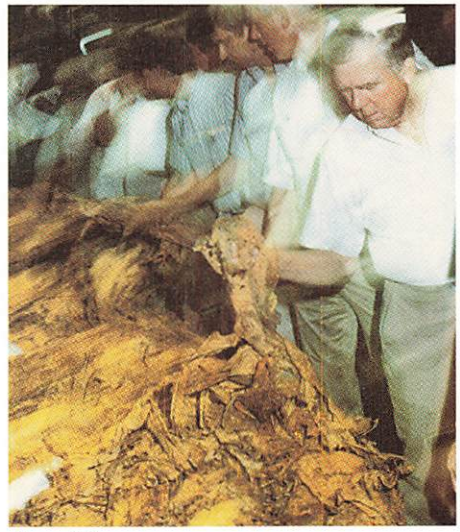
Cover

We can only speculate as to what joke Mark Twain had in mind by posing with a porcelain cat. The pipe, however, is assuredly real. Photo is courtesy of the Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum, Hannibal, Missouri.



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A SINGLE MALT SCOTCH THAT TASTES GREAT

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P&T Readers Respond

Notes from Abroad

The article on Ser Jacopo pipes in the Summer '97 issue was the best article you've had so far. I've been searching over 10 years for the information you wrote about and even attempted a trip to Italy. You really made my day. *P&T* may not be as thick as, say *Cigar Aficionado* etc., but it's just as classy and really packs the content!

And thanks for your excellent showing on the Web. It's not as nice as being able to hold a copy in one's hand, but I'll have access to *P&T* in China now.

John G. Solakian
Beijing, China

My wife just went home to visit her family in Massachusetts and got me a few pipes from Newport, Rhode Island, along with the Spring '97 edition of *Pipes & tobaccos*. I enjoyed reading the article "Peterson of Dublin" very much. It really adds a good flavor to the Peterson's pipe that she got for me.

Living in this part of the world does not benefit pipe smokers much since it is not so popular to smoke pipes. Varieties of pipes and tobaccos are very limited. The prices are quite high due to the import duty of 60 percent and the markups of slow-moving goods. I can live with that, it is better than nothing at all.

Cigars are getting to be quite popular among the "rich and famous," though. There are so many brands to choose. I once in a while buy a box of cigars and enjoy (or get frustrated with) it for two or three weeks.

Well, I just wanted to drop a few lines and to let you know that your magazine is very much enjoyed in this opposite side of the world.

Naruekorn Leenutaphong
Bangkok, Thailand

P&T: Editor-in-Chief Dayton Matlick's outstanding feature articles on major pipe manufacturers around the world have clearly been a hit with our readers. Rest assured that Mr. Matlick will keep them coming. By the way, we thank our international readers for keeping us informed of what's going on with pipes in their neck of the briar.

On Visiting Vesz

I enjoyed, to the enth degree, your outstanding article on master pipesmith Julius Vesz ("Toronto Pipesmith" *P&T* Spring '97). I have known and admired this charming, Old World gentleman for nearly 30 years. Prior to my retirement I had occasion to visit Toronto several times a year. In the '60s, his shop was across the street from the Royal York Hotel, a "walk-down," rather small basement shop that could easily be missed, were one not aware of its existence. As a musician, most of my concerts were in the evening, leaving me ample time to wander over to Julius' shop. Every time I passed through his door I was moved by the ambience inside. The aromas of latakia, black cavendish, and ebauchon shavings were ever present, totally sating one sense while the muted strains of Vivaldi, Bach or Mozart sated another. Julius frequently invited me to join him in his workshop where we would chat 'n puff, and I would watch him "create." It was like stepping back in time to a distant, more tranquil, more genteel world. For that I thank you, Julius! And I thank Messrs. Matlick & Stanion for the recognition they've bestowed on this extraordinary gentleman.

Don G. Russell
Turner Valley, Alberta

Inspirational Reading

Congratulations on another great issue! I am new to pipe smoking. I started once about 10 years ago, but quit after many strange looks from my friends and the public at large. They all seemed to think it was strange that a 20-year-old was smoking a pipe. Now I don't care. I guess that's what age does to a person. I love my pipes and would not give them up for the world.

Your magazine has taught me a lot. I especially liked your article on carving your own pipe, "Pipemaking for the Rank Amateur" (Summer '97). I was inspired to start my own.

I am a member of the South Florida Briar Brotherhood and wanted to thank you for listing our club in your magazine. We have grown tremendously during the last few months and look forward to promoting one of life's great pleasures.

Skylar Rupp
Boca Raton, Florida

Found Art

Tom Thumb and pipe

My grandson, Brendon Devine (aged five), found this remarkable piece in the Mad River, close to his home in More-

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town, Vermont. This tree branch has been shaped over the years by the swiftly flowing waters of the river, and, as you can see, the flow, over time, has created a handsome pipe, a true collector's piece.

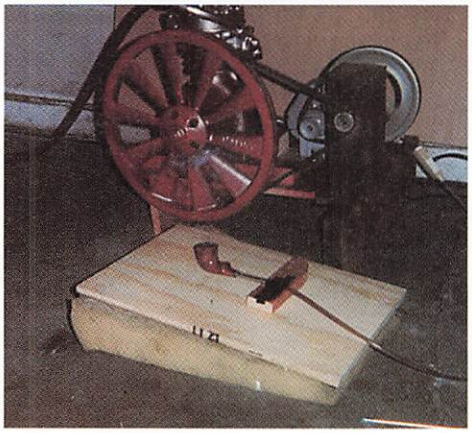
Thomas G. Devine
Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts

Putting on the Pressure

I'd been putting off smoking my new Hilson Dromedary. Those first few bowls are so challenging, they dampen the real joy of pipe smoking. I thought maybe an air compressor could help me out. I slowed it way down, put a four-inch metal leader in place of the stem, hooked up the hose and let it rip. After two bowls—with the 24-hour rest period in between—the pipe was completely broken in.

Anonymous

P.S. I withheld my name because this is someone else's air compressor and I don't want to make a trip to the woodshed.



The mother of inventions

P&T: Your jerry-rigged contraption calls to mind the Pipeking, a commercial desk-top pipe smoking unit used to break in pipes. We're all for taking matters into one's own hands, but—if you are not pulling our leg—you might be running the risk of burning out the bowls of your pipes.

Incidentally, the unauthorized use of an air compressor is a federal offense and we have had to turn your letter over to the FBI's Unauthorized Use Division. We understand that they have traced your typewriter ribbon and may be on their way up your sidewalk at this very minute.

Lady II

In answer to My Fair Lady of Texas (Winter '97), I, too, am a pipe smoker, a young lady of 24 years. I enjoy an occasional bowl especially in times of contemplation, whilst reading or listening to soul-filling choral music such as Tallis or Byrd. I have also been known to take my pipe on solitary evening strolls. I prefer discretion in my 'public' smoking habits but find my 'vice' happily encouraged on pipe-and-port evenings within a close gathering of siblings and friends. I believe the hazy aroma from a pipe to be one of life's simple pleasures—one which I hope to enjoy in all my years to come.

Here's to another 40 years of pipe smoking for ladies!

Miss Agnes A.J. Cserhati
Toronto, Canada

If at first you don't succeed...

Three years ago I bought a couple of pipes and tried them out for a while, but the pleasure I might have had from them was not what it could have been due to my inexperience. After reading Mike Butera's article on how to pack a pipe (Winter '97), I got out my pipes and gave his advice a try. You would not believe what a wonderful and incredible change I experienced in trying a better technique. I ran right over to my local Tinder Box and bought a couple more pipes and have been happily puffing away ever since! Thanks.

Justin Fullmer
Provo, Utah

Man's Best Friend Steals Pipe

Your magazine is a unique publication that I always look forward to reading. The articles are well-written and thoughtful. As a longtime woodworker and artisan, I would be interested to see some articles on making pipes and where to find suppliers.

I've been an occasional pipe smoker for a number of years and recently started to invest in better quality pipes and investigate the various tobaccos available. Typically, I ritualize my pipe smoking by reserving it for special moments such as fishing or as an accompaniment to fine spirits. Even my fiancee finds pipe aroma sets the mood for the day's reflection. As you can see by the enclosed photo, our pup C.J., who is normally a very rambunctious fellow, also enjoys his relaxing moments by stealing his Dad's Savinelli.

Keith E. Knecht
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Not Chuck Stanion

Why not!

How about a feature on pipe-smoking Civil War historian Shelby Foote?

James D. Lorino
Cyberspace

P&T: How about an in-depth Q and A with same? We have one for you in this issue. Hope you enjoy. By the way, we encourage our electronic correspondents to include the city where they live with their e-mail messages.

More kudos

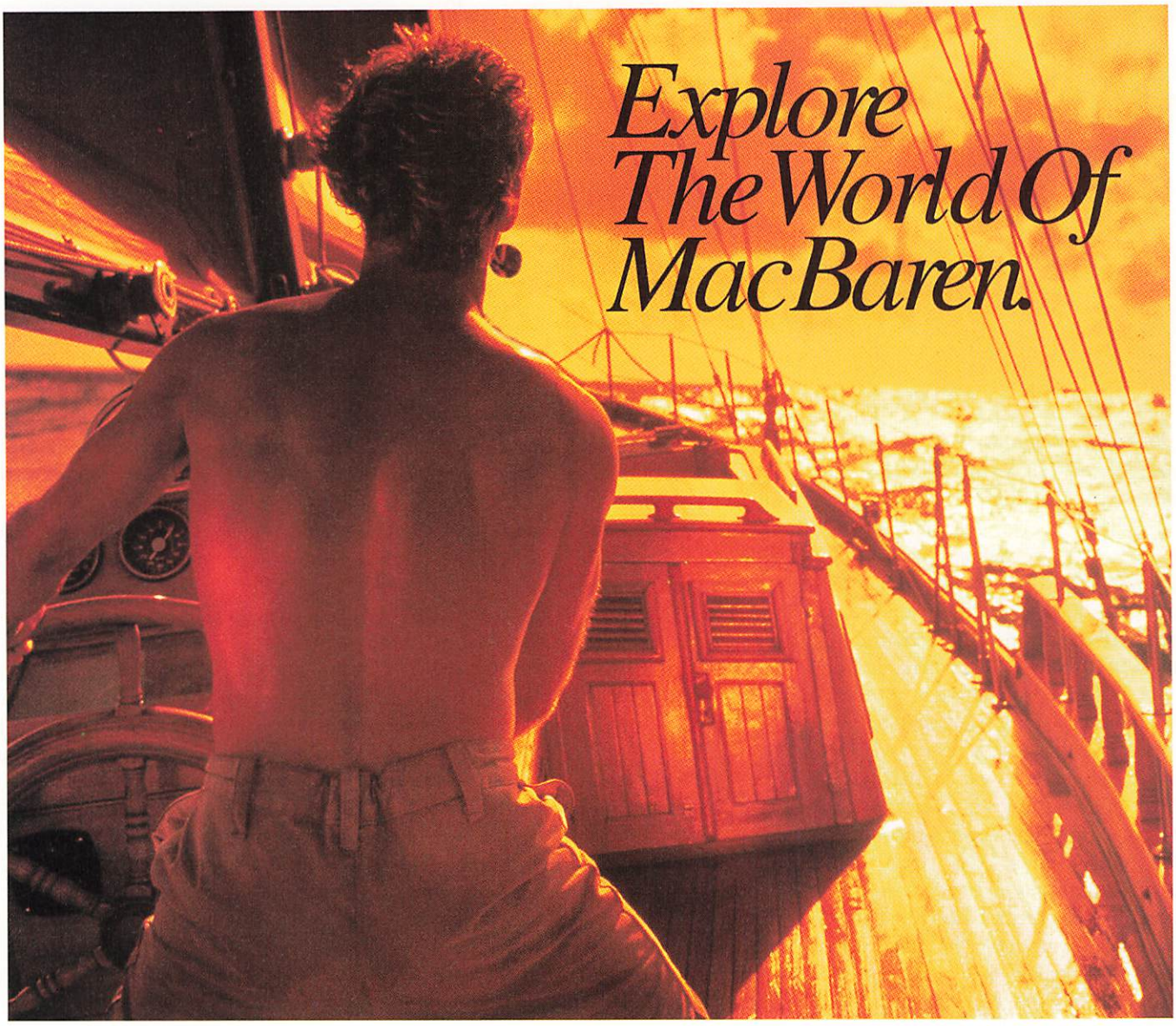
Might I join in the chorus of ultra-satisfied subscribers? Your layouts are especially eye-compelling and most persuasive!

Allen M. Schmuller Ph.D.
DeKalb, Illinois

Thanks for writing.

The editors and staff of Pipes and tobaccos *appreciate letters from our readers. They are an invaluable source of pipe information, feedback and inspiration. Not every letter can be published, but each is read eagerly. Keep them coming!*

—Larry O'Connor



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What's That Red Stuff?

Should I clean my pipes after every smoke? I heard this might make the stems loose.

Reynolds Lankshear
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Yes and no. Yes, you should run pipe cleaners through your pipe after every smoke until they come out clean. You may even want to dip the cleaners in grain alcohol. But it is probably best not to dismantle your pipe after every smoke. With only one moving part, a pipe is a simple machine, but it will wear at the mortise and tenon over the years, so remove the stem sparingly. Some experts recommend a thorough cleaning every three to five smokes; others say it's necessary only every six months or so. Unfortunately, the degradation in the flavor of tobacco that happens as the pipe gets dirty is very gradual, so you may not realize you need to give it a thorough cleaning until you've stopped enjoying the pipe. But then the difference in the smoke after the cleaning will amaze you.

You stated in the Spring 1997 issue that Balkan Sobranie is no longer available in the United States; I have to correct you, however. I purchase Balkan Sobranie on a fairly regular basis at Jeanie's Smoke Shop in downtown Salt Lake City, Utah...yes, in the very heart of Mormondom! Somehow, Jeanie's is breaking the blockade!

Andy G. Curtz
Salt Lake City, Utah

I called Jeanie's, and they do indeed still have some pouches of Balkan Sobranie—but they say it is left over from that kinder, gentler era when companies outside the U.S. weren't afraid of being hamstrung by sue-happy American tobacco Nazis. I imagine there are still rich little pockets of Sobranie in various tobacconist shops around the country. My advice is, next time you're in Jeanie's buy all the Sobranie they have left, because you won't be seeing it again.

I particularly enjoyed the article on Ivarsson Pipes, and promptly sought to buy one. No pipe shop in Denver had one. I called Iwan Ries in Chicago and they said they haven't seen one for years! Where do I find one?

R. Morgan Graham
Conifer, Colorado

Ivarsson pipes are quickly snatched up by collectors, and are especially popular in Japan and Germany. The only place in the United States that currently carries them, as far as I've been able to find, is Uptown Smoke Shop in Nashville, Tennessee (888.292.9576), which also carries other hard-to-find high-grades, such as Vesz and Chonowitsch pipes. Even so, they get only a few at a time, and they are quickly purchased. However, Keith Moore, the manager at Uptown's, has made arrangements with Lars Ivarsson to have pipes made as they are ordered. It means having to wait a few weeks (or months), but these are some of the finest pipes in the world, and worth the wait.

I recently purchased (at a flea market) an Austrian-made meerschaum with 12kt gold band and an excellent amber stem. My question is, how do you take care of any scratches or other blemishes on an amber stem? I have good luck in cleaning vulcanite stems with a variety of rubbing compounds, fine wet-dry sandpaper, and a buffing wheel with carnauba wax. Can the same methods be used with amber?

Tom Allen
Severn, Maryland

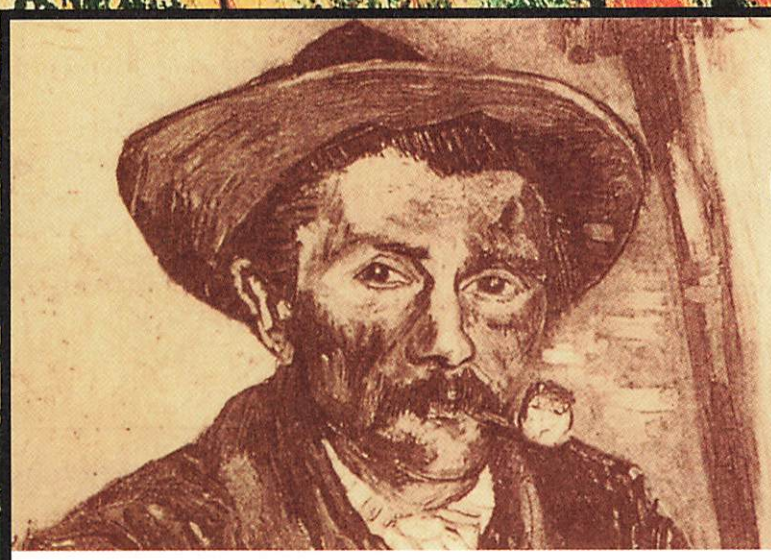
It is best to leave amber alone, according to professional pipe restorer J.T. Cooke. Real amber is very much like glass, and you risk chipping it with a buffing wheel. Even if approached carefully with various grades of compound and a slow buffing wheel, there is no telling what amber will do. Mark Tinsky, another expert, agrees, but says that if pressed to try—and only if he were not held responsible—he would hand-sand the scratches with very fine grit sandpaper, then apply buffing compound with a rag and buff by hand, holding his breath the whole time. So if the scratches are really driving you nuts, you might try that. But keep in mind it is more likely the stem will be destroyed than rejuvenated.

I've heard that I can tighten a loose stem by heating it, but don't know how to proceed. Can you describe the process?

John Height
New York, New York

First I'll explain how to do it, then why not to.

Remove the stem from the pipe, and gradually heat it at the tenon. It doesn't take much heat. An alcohol lamp is a good temperature, but people have used hair dryers or candles—though candles do not burn clean, and will leave a residue of soot all over the tenon. When warm the mouthpiece material, whether vulcanite or lucite, will be pliable, and you may press the tenon straight down on a flat surface. This will induce a bulge, expanding the circumference of the tenon. Don't push hard, as very little expansion of the joint is necessary. Let the mouthpiece cool—you can run it under cool water if you wish—dry it, and try fitting it into the mortise. You can sand the tenon with extra fine sandpaper if the fit is too tight, or repeat the process if the joint is still loose. ▶



Genius

Ser Jacopo dalla Gemma
pipe fatte a mano

Picta 13

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by Ser Jacopo

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Be patient, and don't force the stem, as you risk cracking the shank.

Now here's why you shouldn't use the above method: Without precise tools, there is no way to make that tenon an even cylindrical shape for a consistent fit around 360 degrees in the mortise. Basically, the stem will fit securely because a couple of small spots are very tight. This will eventually cause wear in the mortise, as well as subjecting it to uneven stress, and you'll end up with a loose stem all over again because the wood in the shank will quickly wear down—if, indeed, it does not crack the shaft of the pipe. If it is a pipe you want to last for years to come, send it out for a professional refitting.

My pipe collection consists of many pieces with a wide variety of finishes. Why is it that only the reddish-colored ones tend to "bleed" onto my hands? After finishing a smoke in one of these pipes (which include Knute, Soren, Savinelli Autograph and Chacom among others) my hands appear as if I have consumed an entire bag of Cheetos (and I don't even like Cheetos). I have never had this problem with any other finish, and not all of the reddish bowls "bleed." Is there something I can do (short of never touching the bowl) to avoid this problem, or should I just avoid red-finished pipes altogether?

Thomas A. Hendricks
Minier, Illinois

There is a purpose other than esthetics behind the use of stains in pipe manufacture. Flawless, exquisitely grained bowls are typically given a very light stain or left natural, because the grain is already fine. If the grain needs to be brought out a little, a slightly darker stain is appropriate. Yet darker stains, such as walnut, can make a fair grain very pronounced, as well as make very minor pits less noticeable.

Red stain is used to accentuate the shape of the pipe without drawing attention to the grain. It is used on bowls that don't have flaws, but that also don't have interesting grain patterns. Most are dipped or painted with the stain, and then very lightly buffed before waxing. The red color is an aniline dye, and the stain has no binder or adhesive because this would make it soak into the wood and emphasize the weak grain. So it just sits on the outside of the bowl, and the only thing that keeps it from coming off on your hands is the wax finish. As the wax wears off with handling—which is perfectly normal—your hands come into direct contact with the dye, and voila! Cheetos hands.

The best thing you can do is make sure you keep a good consistent coat of carnauba wax on your pipes. Not only will it make those red pipes glow, it will provide a good protective finish.

All the recent discussion of pipe cleaning techniques prompts me to offer my own solution to the problem, which I happened upon by accident last summer.

We have an alcoholic cow named Wholestein here on our farm in Upstate New York. How she happened to become alcoholic is a sad story better left for another time, but let's just say she's hard to live with if she doesn't get her six quarts of corn liquor every day.

Well, one night I'd just finished giving Wholestein her nightcap and put down my pipe so I could rinse the bucket (corn squeezings will eat right through a steel bucket if you don't rinse it) when that drunken cow made a snatch for my pipe and swallowed it right down! I immediately dove out the window and ran for the woods, thinking the cow would explode when the lit pipe reached the corn liquor. But I guess there's not enough oxygen inside a cow to allow ignition, since nothing happened. I wasn't concerned about the pipe itself; it was an old beat-up thing, all caked and charred, and the stem was all discolored. Heck, I was glad to see it go.

But I was surprised next morning when I was shoveling out Wholestein's stall to discover that pipe still whole—I wiped it off some, and was amazed to see what great shape it was in. The vulcanite was shiny and deep black, the char and cake of the tobacco chamber had been replaced with a dime's thickness of milky white carbon, and all the dings and bruises were smoothed out. The trip through that cow's four stomachs completely reconditioned the pipe. Well, I fired it up on the spot, and it smoked great! It lent the tobacco a deep, earthy, organic flavor, with a creamy and light quality.

So now when a briar starts to sour, or just get shabby, I feed it to Wholestein and next day it's better than new. I used to think I'd be better off reducing that cow to a Saturday barbecue, but now I wouldn't trade her for a Castello Fiamatta!

Michael Olsef
Brooktondale, New York

I've heard of this refurbishing method using drunken yaks, goats, and llamas, but the simplicity and availability of dairy cows escaped me. I would like to caution our readers, however, that feeding meerschaum or corncob pipes to drunken cows is not recommended. ***P&T***

Ask Chuck is written by Associate Editor Chuck Stanion. The column reflects both research and opinion. We welcome questions, comments and disagreements, all of which may be sent to: Ask Chuck, P&T, 3000 Highwoods Blvd., Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27604-1029. Fax: 919.876.6531. Email: speccomm@interserv.com.

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A pipe smokers bridge to cigars.

Pipe smokers and cigar smokers have at least two things in common: Both enjoy the pleasure of a leisurely smoke, and both enjoy the variety of flavors which can only come from expertly blended tobaccos.

Many pipe smokers have found they can combine various flavor extracts with select tobaccos to create a variety of smoking experiences. These pipe smokers may now extend their pleasure to cigars thanks to the efforts of Jean Claude and Suzanne Marty who have found the perfect process to imbue cigar tobacco with the world's finest Cognac and Single Malt Scotch Whisky.

It has long been a delightful surprise to first discover the delicious harmony of flavors which is achieved by combining an exquisite hand rolled cigar and a sip of perfectly aged spirits. Indeed, many cigar enthusiasts have long used the literal method of immersing the head of their cigar into Cognac or Single Malt Whisky to achieve this flavor sensation. The problem with this emersion method, however, is that the flavors are typically inconsistent, usually weighing too heavily toward the spirits. Those who enjoy Cognac or Single Malt Scotch Whisky while smoking are just now learning how ingeniously the two can be combined.

Jean Claude and Suzanne dedicated four years of their lives to create the secret patented process used to imbue their cigars. For them, it was just as important to find the perfect blend of tobaccos as it was to find the perfect spirits. It was their objective that neither the tobacco blend or the spirits be predominant, rather that the two compliment each other.

Unlike many flavored cigars, El Sublimado and El Incomparable cigars are not sprayed or dipped after they are rolled. Each leaf in El Sublimado and El Incomparable cigars are treated prior to rolling. This pre-construction imbuing yields a delightful flavor which is consistent throughout the entire cigar.

As you can imagine, the time necessary to manufacture El Sublimado and El Incomparable cigars is considerably longer than their counterparts. While most cigars take two weeks to manufacture, El Sublimado and El Incomparable take over four months to complete. This extra time is necessary due to the additional manufacturing steps El Sublimado and El Incomparable must go through. In this day and time when cigar manufacturers are rushing to bring new cigars to market, it is encouraging to find a manufacturer who will not sacrifice quality for the sake of expediency.

"We want more than quality; we want perfection."

It was not enough that Jean Claude and Suzanne found the proper spirits and tobaccos to accomplish their goal. They also wanted their cigars to smoke and burn with the consistency of a world class cigar. To accomplish this goal, Jean Claude and Suzanne employed the talents of the best cigar hand rollers they could find. Jean Claude and Suzanne's instructions to the rollers were "We want more than quality; we want perfection."

El Sublimado and El Incomparable are quality checked not only during manufacturing but also at the point of distribution. And as if this were not enough, Jean Claude and Suzanne offer a 100% Manufacturer's Quality Guarantee, even if some of the cigar has been smoked! It is obvious that Jean Claude and Suzanne want nothing less than for their cigars to be your favorite cigars.

Cigar connoisseurs and pipe smokers alike will find both pleasure and gratification in El Sublimado and El Incomparable premium luxury cigars. The passion which drove Jean Claude and Suzanne to painstaking levels can be savored in every draw of El Sublimado and El Incomparable. And the perfected bonding of tobacco and spirits will certainly outlive Jean Claude and Suzanne as their legacy.

You can learn even more about El Sublimado and El Incomparable cigars from Jean Claude and Suzanne's World Wide Web Site at **http://www.Sublimado.com.** Enjoy.

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An advertisement

Civil Discourse

A conversation with novelist and Civil War historian Shelby Foote

By Larry O'Connor

Pipe-smoking novelist and historian Shelby Dade Foote once likened his pursuit of writing to a religion. It is a credo he has practiced almost daily since declaring himself a full-time writer 51 years ago—after the publication of his short story "Flood Burial" in the Saturday Evening Post.

In a remarkably prolific five-year period from 1949 to 1954, Foote published five critically acclaimed novels, including "Shiloh," a marvelous tale based on the Civil War battle of the same name.

Foote's accuracy, eye for detail and amazing ability to breathe life into historical figures and events prompted his editors at Random House to ask him in 1954 to write a short history of the Civil War. Two decades—and a million and a half words later—Foote completed his benchmark "The Civil War: A Narrative." The massive three-volume history is widely regarded as Foote's masterpiece and one of the definitive studies of the Civil War.

Foote was born in 1916 in Greenville, Mississippi, in the Mississippi Delta. An avid reader from childhood, Foote rejected formal education after his high school years. He did enroll for two years at the University of North Carolina, the majority of which time was spent in the library, poring through classic literature, ancient and modern.

The writer enlisted in the U.S. Army when Hitler invaded Poland at the outbreak of World War II. He rose to the rank of captain of artillery in Northern Ireland, but was court-martialed and dismissed in 1944 for a technical violation. (He visited his Irish girlfriend who lived 32 miles from the base in Belfast, two miles beyond the 30-mile limit.) Foote re-enlisted in 1945, this time into the Marine Corps.

Foote managed to bring his novelist's gift for storytelling to his lively, but always precise, recounting of the Civil War. In fact, Foote maintains that the historian's responsibility is to make the recounting of events as lively as the events themselves.

On the other hand, Foote summarily rejects both fictionalized histories and less-than-accurate historically based fiction. "I've never known a modern historical instance where the truth wasn't superior to anybody's distortions," he once said.

On the completion of his Civil War narrative, Foote returned to his beloved fiction. His novel "September, September," published in 1978, centers around the kidnapping of a black child in Memphis in 1957, at the time of desegregation in Little Rock and the Soviet Union's launch of the Sputnik.

Foote also served as technical adviser and a "talking head" on Ken Burns' award-winning television series on the Civil War. Now 80, Foote is at work on "Two Gates to the City," a novel he has worked on periodically since the 1950s.

With a deep, characteristically resonant Mississippi drawl, the ever-gracious Shelby Foote spoke with P&T *over the phone from Memphis where he has lived since the 1950s.*

P&T: You were once quoted as saying that if you had realized how long "The Civil War: A Narrative" was going to take to write you would never have taken it on.

SF: No. I wouldn't have. But I am now very glad that I did. And I am very proud of the work. I felt very happy with it all the way through. I worked hard, but I enjoyed every minute, so I don't deserve any special credit for it. People say that I gave up my life or I sacrificed this and that and the

On page 18, Shelby Foote is shown in the Tuilleries garden in Paris on his 75th birthday. "The naked lady alongside me is a Maillol and adds greatly to the scene," Foote writes. Above, he walks the streets of Soho District in New York City. (Photos by the author's son, Huger Foote.)

other. Anything I did, I did gladly.

P&T: Didn't it start out as a much shorter project?

SF: Yes, the contract called for a short history of the Civil War and I sat down and outlined it and I saw there wouldn't be any sense in doing an encapsulated history. So I wrote Random House and said I'd go spread-eagle on the thing. There was a little delay—about a week—and finally they said, "Go ahead." And I did—for the next 20 years.

P&T: Most people would consider it your master work? How do you feel?

SF: I like to think of myself as a novelist and I wouldn't want to praise anything over my novels. But I'll probably be remembered, if for anything, for the Civil War history.

P&T: You've called the Civil War America's greatest tragedy. What was most tragic about it?

SF: It seems to me that there wasn't any other way to settle the basic questions without fighting. The tragedy is that it couldn't have been averted—plus the fact that there were 1,075,000 casualties.

But the Civil War did settle two things. It put an end to slavery and it made secession impossible. Those are the two very important things.

P&T: Speaking of the Civil War, our readers would probably like to know if pipe smoking had a significant role in it?

SF: Absolutely. A lot of the men smoked pipes. Tobacco was a prized object. The Confederates had tobacco and the

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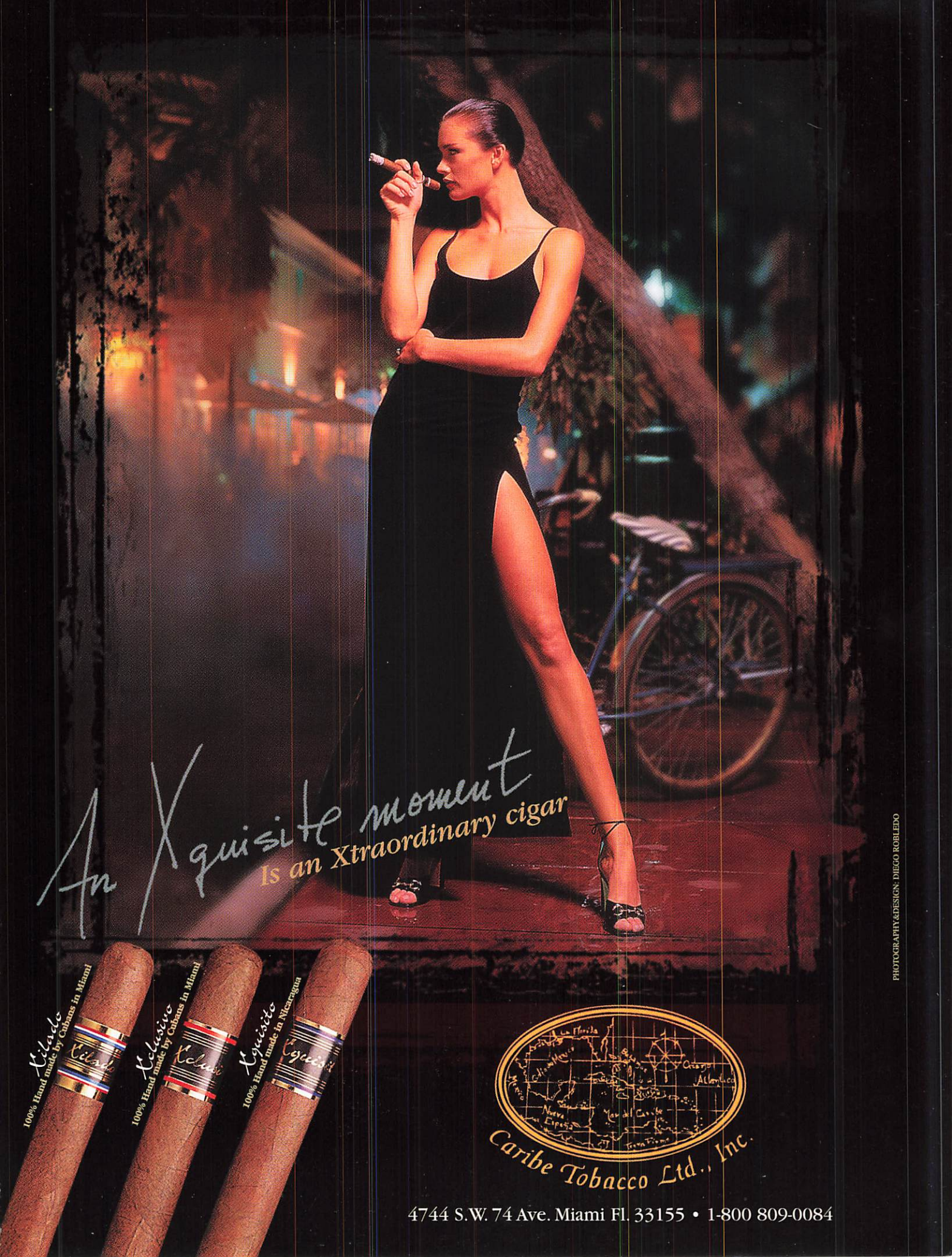
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Northerners had coffee, and they used to swap whenever there was a truce. There were some informal ways to exchange things, without killing each other.

P&T: Specifically for tobacco-coffee barter?

SF: Yes, that was the swap. The Northerners got an issue of coffee. And there was practically no coffee in the South. They used all kinds of substitutes, especially peanuts ground up.

P&T: There is a wonderful scene in your novel "Shiloh," where Confederate soldiers overrun the abandoned tents of retreating Union forces and then stop to guzzle the steaming coffee left behind, one soldier chugging it right from the pot.

SF: They were crazy for coffee and, as the war went on, it got rarer and rarer. There was never any coffee grown in the South, and the Northern blockade kept the South from getting it.

P&T: And the tobacco was grown in the South, but not in the North...

SF: So it made a good swap.

P&T: How often would an exchange take place?

SF: Anytime there was some kind of truce...when there were burial details out, that would be an occasion, or when the armies had been in position for a long time on opposite sides of a river. They'd even make little boats with sails on them that they would sail back and forth to each other to make the exchange.

P&T: It's hard to imagine something like that happening in other wars. The idea of the Germans and Allied forces doing that in World War II, or Chinese and Americans in Korea...

SF: In a civil war, where you both are from the same country, where you have a common language and many common traditions, it leads to that kind of thing. It also leads to a more intense hatred. If you've ever seen two brothers have a fight, you know how savage it can be.

While we're talking about smoking and the Civil War, it is very late in the war during Banks' Red River Campaign in Louisiana that I first saw a reference to cigarettes. It was General Stone and he was sitting on a fence smoking a cigarette and people scarcely knew what that was. And that was in 1864.

P&T: One of the most famous cigar smokers, certainly of that era—Ulysses Grant—was originally a pipe smoker, wasn't he?

SF: Yes, he shifted to cigars because they were sent to him as gifts. [Editor's Note: This came about, according to Foote's novel "Shiloh," after Grant called for the unconditional surrender of besieged Confederate forces at Fort Donelson in Tennessee, earning public acclaim in the North and the nickname "Unconditional Surrender" (U.S.) Grant.] When he got up in the morning, very early of course, Grant put something like a dozen cigars in his uniform coat for the day. Grant also had a cigarette lighter— the first reference I'd ever seen to a cigarette lighter. It wasn't a lighter the way we think of it. It was sort of a pump thing that was lit by a flint.

There were a lot of pipe smokers, too. Of course a pipe was something you had to smoke during a lull. They seldom went into action smoking a pipe.

P&T: Could you tell me about your own pipe smoking...how did it come about?

SF: I started smoking the way most people did. I was 13 or 14 and I wanted to be grown-up. I actually started with a pipe, which was kind of strange. I guess it was because a pipe made me more grown-up. But I also smoked cigarettes. I spent 20 years writing those three volumes of the Civil War and I calculated one day, just for the fun of it, that at the rate of a pack and a half a day—which is really a rather low estimate because I nearly always had a cigarette in my lip and a pen in my right hand while I was working—that I smoked 150,000 regular, unfiltered Chesterfields. And I'm here to testify to it.

P&T: But in the evening you would smoke your pipe?

SF: That's right. With a pipe I try never to smoke while I am writing because the thing goes out every now and then. But it's a pipe I smoke while I'm reading or studying or doing anything like that.

P&T: Why is that?

SF: I don't know—it's got something to do with rumination, I guess. A pipe is a sort of a companion during study. A cigarette is just something to fiddle with. The pipes I smoked over the years have been kind of interesting. Like most people my age, I started way back then with a Kaywoodie, which was the pipe most admired. And later I moved on to GBD and then finally moved up to Dunhill. I've got perhaps 100 pipes. A lot of them have been sent to me by people who liked my work on the Civil War.

P&T: Of those 100 pipes, are they predominantly Dunhills?

SF: No, they are all kinds of pipes, including some of the weirdest ones you ever saw, from Calabash on down, from full Canadian to the little stubby pipes you can stick in your pocket.

P&T: How many of them do you smoke regularly?

SF: I'd say about 12 or 14. The rest of them are just sitting in the rack.

P&T: What kinds of pipes are the 12 or 14 that you actually use a fair amount of the time?

SF: They're mostly Comoys and Dunhills and that Italian one, I never can remember the name of them.

P&T: Bents or straights?

SF: They're mostly straights. I don't like a curved pipe. For some reason I don't really understand, saliva collects in a curved pipe. For me anyhow. Then it gets to bubbling, like a stew.

P&T: How about the size of the bowls? Do they vary?

SF: Yes. If I am at home being comfortable, then I can smoke a sizable pipe that will stay lit well. If I'm going out, I have to have something that fits in my pocket allright, so its better to use a smaller pipe. I've discovered a strange thing about pipes. There is absolutely no telling how a pipe's going to smoke until you smoke it. I don't care whether you paid $200 for it or $40. You still don't know whether it

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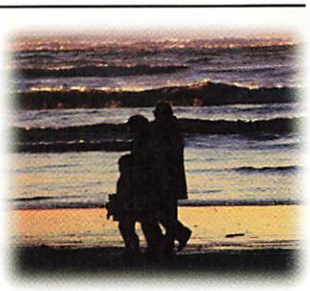

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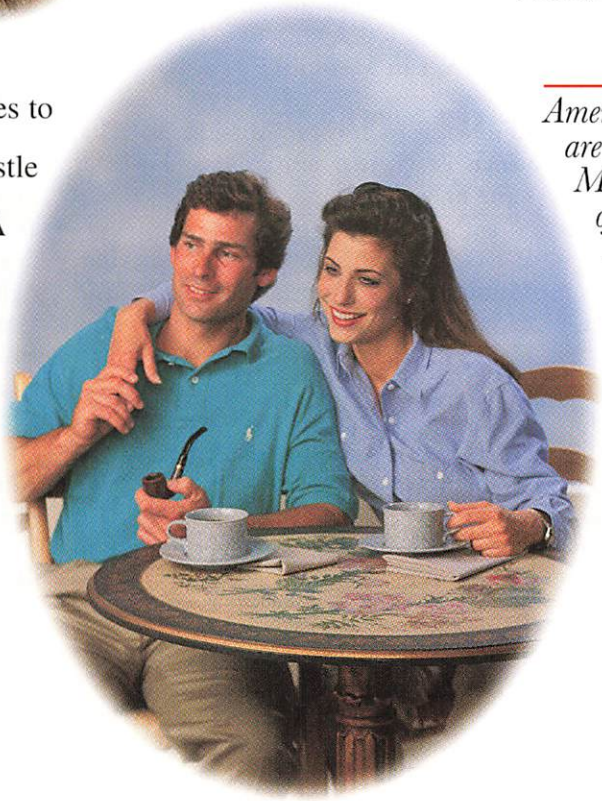

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will smoke well until you've had it for a while.

P&T: You're just smoking a pipe these days.

SF: Yes, eight years ago I had an angioplasty, one of the early ones. And they wanted me to quit smoking. I said I'd quit cigarettes, but I wasn't about to give up my pipe. They said that was a decent compromise. So I smoke nothing but a pipe and a very occasional cigar.

P&T: What kind of cigars do you favor?

SF: I don't have a particular favorite cigar. It's just that when I get a notion to have one, I buy a rather expensive one and smoke it rather carefully and evenly. I have a rule that is very strict about cigars: I never smoke a cigar unless I am sitting down to enjoy it. It's a special treat I give myself not over maybe four or five times a year. But the pipe I smoke almost constantly. When I gave up cigarettes, I became a full-time pipe smoker. I smoked my pipe about four times as much as I had before.

P&T: What kind of tobacco do you like?

SF: I've used exactly the same tobacco for over 50 years. It's called Edward G. Robinson, made in California. On the lid it says, "This will give you cancer." It doesn't say the surgeon general "thinks" or anything else, just absolutely flatly that this will give you cancer. It's some kind of California law. Incidentally, Edward G. is such a fine tobacco that it packs too tight in a pipe, so I mix it with a rough cut tobacco, about one-third of the rough cut, two-thirds of the Edward G., which makes just what I like.

P&T: At one time you were writing seven days a week, eight, 10, 12 hours a day. Are you still writing as much?

SF: No, I take Sundays off and often anytime I feel like it I take off. I am 80 years old. So I guess I can do that. Also, I walk a couple of miles every afternoon, which breaks into my day. That's on the advice of doctors, too.

P&T: Your current project—"Two Gates to the City"...

SF: That's a novel in progress, it's moving very slowly because I am doing other things. I had outlined the beginning of it and even started on it before I began the "Civil War." I came up here to Memphis intending to write "Two Gates to the City" and got sidetracked into the war.

P&T: What are the two gates to Memphis?

SF: It's not Memphis. It's the City of God. And it's about two routes there. It's about three cousins, one of whom is in business and another one is a person with a different kind of notion of what life is about. Each of them represents a way of life, and it's up to the third cousin, the youngest, to choose which way to follow. That's only part of the story.

P&T: Set in Memphis?

SF: No, it's set in the Mississippi Delta, which is where I am from and what I write mainly about.

P&T: Your hometown, Greenville, Mississippi, was not a seat of the kind of virulent racism found in some places in the South.

SF: No, it was much better than any other place in Mississippi with regard to that problem.

P&T: And you were outspoken against racism in the '60s...

SF: It was easy for me to be outspoken; I wasn't risking a business. If I'd had a small insurance business and I'd been outspoken, I would have gone out of business. Since I had none of those threats hanging over my head, I felt free to say anything I wanted to say.

P&T: But you lived in Mobile, Alabama, for a while and had some problems.

SF: I lived down on the Alabama coast for about six or eight months trying to build a house, and I ran into the Ku Klux Klan and George Wallace's people and all that.

P&T: For speaking out against racism?

SF: Yes.

P&T: You maintained, as the Civil Rights era moved on, that the key to progress would be for blacks to take the new opportunities afforded them rather than the road of confrontation.

SF: I've always thought the proper solution would be education—on both sides. It's a pet theory of mine and it's got a paradox to it. I think this country has two enormous sins on it. One is slavery and the other is emancipation.

They told four and a half million people, "You are free; now hit the road." But they didn't do a damned thing to help them. The Freedman's Bureau was a sorry joke. At least three-quarters of them were illiterate. Probably not one-tenth of them had a trade that they could make a living by outside of farming. And we're still suffering the consequences of that.

Integration of the schools was done in a wretched way. They started in the high schools instead of in the first grade, as they should have done. All kinds of mistakes were made during the civil rights struggle, because as in the Civil War, the leaders on both sides were so violently opposed to each other.

P&T: You once said something to the effect that a writer's style provides a window to the quality of his or her mind.

SF: That's right. Marcel Proust offers the explanation that I like best. He calls style a "quality of vision." It's the way you see the world. And you develop that style by very hard work. People don't quite understand that in learning how to write a good sentence a writer undergoes as rigid an education as a doctor does in learning to take out an appendix. It is really hard work. But people don't know that. They think you wake up in the middle of the night and dash off four or five thousand words. It's not that way, as you know.

P&T: What do you think your style says about the qualities of your mind?

SF: All I can say is I am sure it does tell something. But I'd have a hard time analyzing myself from the inside. *P&T*

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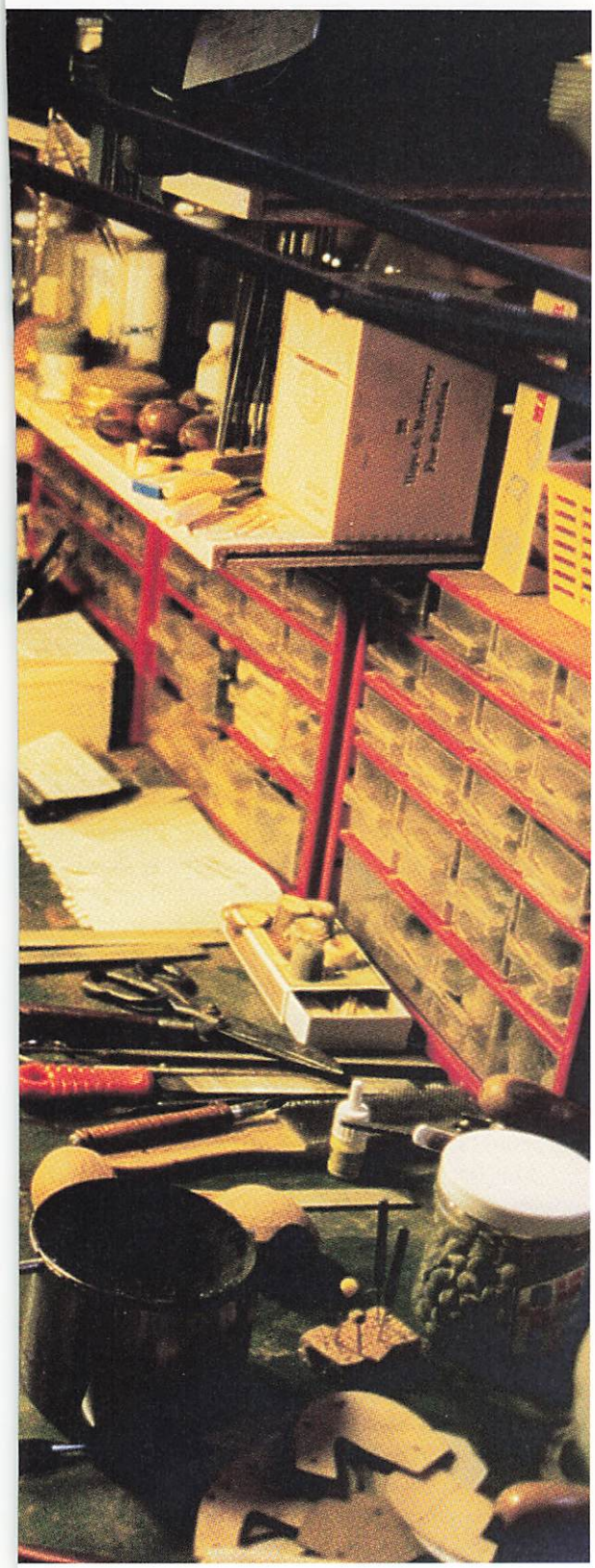


Jess Chonowitsch created an entire life balanced around pipe and family in his rural home. Each part supports the other as he creates briar masterpieces

by Dayton H. Matlick

Jess Chonowitsch spends most of each day in the one-man shop behind his rural home. Sometimes there is the whir of a motor running, the buzz of a sanding disc working briar. But most of the time there is the almost inaudible *shhhk, shhhk* sound of a small piece of sandpaper moving back and forth over a pipe for hours at a time. Fingers seek perfection while the mind floats free.

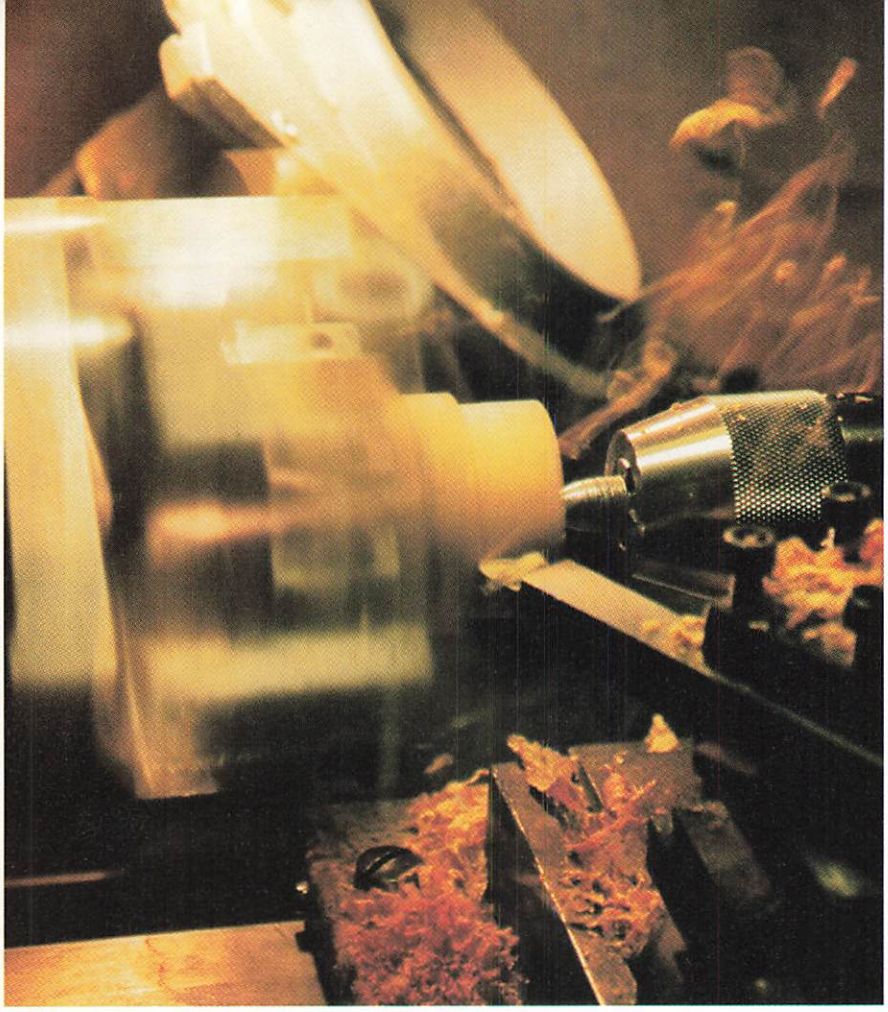
The 200 to 250 pipes produced each year in this comfortable, window-lined workshop are as good as any produced in the world, and better than most. Aside from the fact that Jess's family has to eat, producing a set number of pipes isn't a primary goal. Rather, the goal is to create an image—a model—in his mind, find the right piece of briar in his stock, and turn that image into a piece of art that can be touched, held and smoked. Art that is as close to perfection as he can reach. This includes solitary hours of hand sanding until the shape and touch of the wood are as close to that model as he can come.

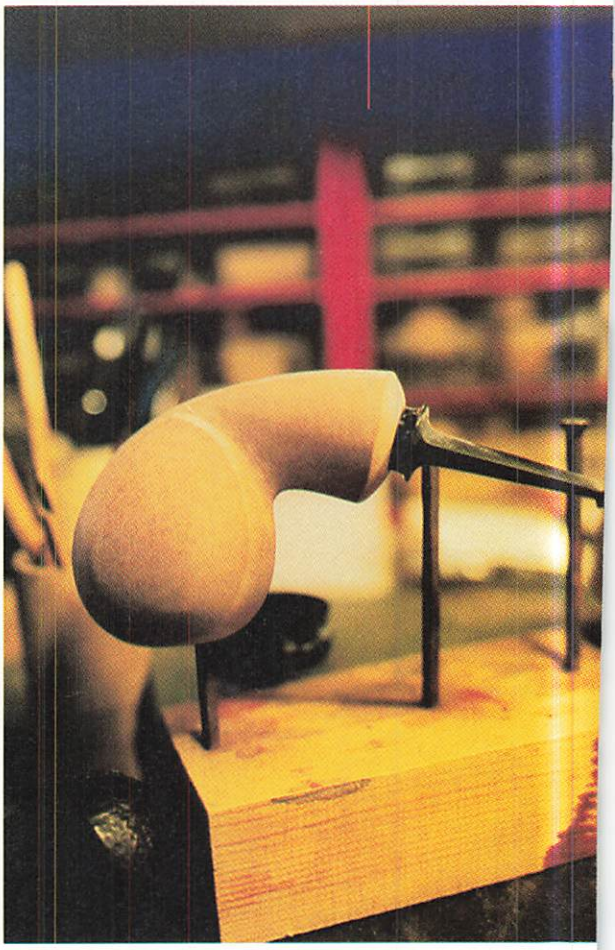
Creativity has an allure of its own. To taste of its almost addictive pleasure is to know fulfillment, satisfaction, a joy of being alive—a joy that can lead to all manner of changes in a life.

Jess (pronounced *yess*) grew up in Copenhagen where his father, Emil, was a hard-working tobacconist for 20 years. All of his life, young Jess had been surrounded by pets—cats, birds, turtles, but especially dogs. After graduation from high school, it seemed natural to sign up to study veterinary medicine. His first year behind him, his summer vacation goal was to find a job for about a month and a half that would generate enough money to allow him to travel around Europe for the other month before classes started again. That plan didn't last long.

His father had become disenchanted with 14-hour days as a tobacconist and had started the month before working part-time for Poul Rasmussen, a renowned maker of classic pipes. Yes,

Everything else was put aside once Jess experienced the joys of creating pipes by hand.





"...I could see the difference... then it was up to me to develop the technique that would enable me to make it better."

—*Jess*

he could use some temporary help; send the boy around, Rasmussen told Emil, beginning an odyssey that transformed Jess' life.

When the month and a half had passed, Jess was so captivated by the joy of working with his hands he asked Rasmussen if he would teach him how to become a pipemaker. Rasmussen argued that pipemaking wasn't a normal trade...there was no formal apprenticeship arrangement to follow. However, between them they came up with a three-year "learning contract."

"The first thing I did was to repair pipes," says Jess. "I put on new mouthpieces, cleaned pipes, polished pipes—made pipes new again. Rasmussen worked on pipes from a number of companies at that time, mostly English. People didn't want to send their pipes across the channel for repairs. I got black all over from cleaning and polishing old pipes, but it was a good way to learn about the materials. For example, when I made a new mouthpiece, I would find that sanding would take some of the original coloring off the briar. I had to learn how to mix the exact coloring to match.

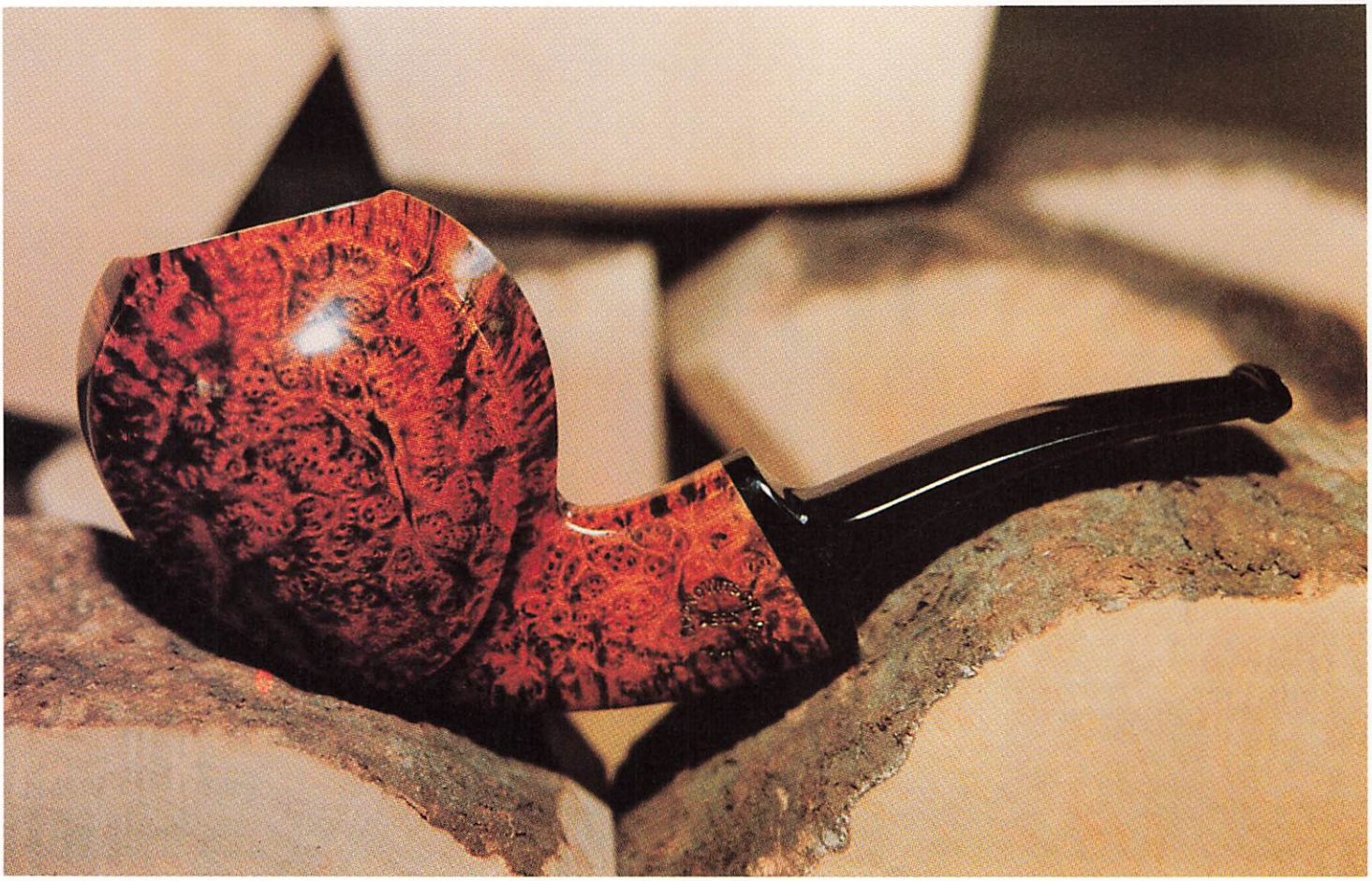
"Then he taught me the fundamentals about making pipes. I basically learned by doing. There was always a lot of briar around on which to practice that wasn't suitable for making quality pipes. When I showed Poul my efforts, he would say, 'That isn't good enough. This is wrong and that is wrong. Try again.' And that was the start of it.

"Sometime he would take my effort over to a sanding disk and change it. But he never let me see what he was doing. If necessary, he would hold his hand in the way. That was a good way in the end, although frustrating at the time. When he changed the pipe, I could see the difference with my eyes. And then it was up to me to develop the technique that would enable me to make it better. It helped me develop the solution in both my mind and in my hands.

"About a year and a half into the contract, his weak heart—he had a plastic replacement valve—gave out and he died. But by then I was far enough along that I could continue to make pipes in his name for six months, until Anne-Julie, his wife, could take over and run the workshop."

This left Jess with two problems. He needed money on which to live and he needed to learn more about making beautiful pipes. His solution contributed to both needs in a unique way. For money, he worked in the W.Ø. Larsen pipe factory located in the center of Copenhagen from eight in the morning until one in the afternoon. The factory approach was very repetitive, but Jess' previous training helped him so much that he was considered a gifted employee.

The afternoons were spent learning pipemaking about 200 yards up the street in the workshop of Sixten Ivarsson, the famous Danish



pipemaker who revolutionized pipemaking in Europe, and, later, around the world. Ivarsson perfected what has become known worldwide as the freehand pipe, although he never used the word himself. Jess was learning at the same time as Sixten's son, Lars, who has become a famous pipemaker in his own right and with whom Jess stays in regular contact.

It was under Sixten and his departure from strictly classical shapes that Jess learned to use his creativity to discover new models of pipes.

"Sixten was a great man to learn from...the most creative pipemaker at that time...maybe ever," says Jess. "The afternoons were a much more relaxing time than in the factory. First, we would start with tea or coffee and bread and sausages. There was never a hurry when you worked with Sixten."

"It was quite different from other places that produced pipes. There you had to finish so many pipes every day. With Sixten, I could use the whole day to try and find a new shape. But then, he wasn't paying me any money, either. I was only there for learning.

"When I made something wrong, he'd tell me immediately. 'You must think that's not good enough. You can do better than that.'"

The instruction was free. However, their agreement provided that when Jess made something Sixten decided was good enough to sell, they split the proceeds between them. Also, when Sixten had a lot of orders, he would make the total shape and then Jess would do the final sandpapering, coloring and polishing.

"I learned slowly the way to make his model and to make it in the way he wanted it. I never saw him in a hurry. He always took it slow and good. But I was always encouraged to use my own creativity in my own work. He never said, 'You must do this model in this way.' Instead, he would encourage me to pick up a piece of briar and make it into whatever pipe I wanted."

Another thing Jess learned from Sixten was to make the mouthpieces just as creatively as the pipes. In his other experiences, he had used preformed mouthpieces that only required limited changes to fit them to the finished pipes. Sixten insisted, however, that Jess start with a blank rod of vulcanite and shape the mouthpiece to fit the exact needs of each different pipe. Mouthpieces, like every part of the pipe, must be technically and aesthetically correct, he declared.

Today, Jess still primarily uses vulcanite for his mouthpieces, but it is a different vulcanite than existed in Sixten's day. The expensive, modern German version polishes to a deeper black that holds its shine longer and is more resilient between the teeth.

Sixten and Poul Rasmussen had worked

A special machine is used for the first cuts. In contrast to many other machines with the same general purposes, the block is locked into place and then spun while, first, excess wood is removed from the bowl area and, second, the tobacco chamber is cut. Sanding discs help form the general shape of the pipe, but the critical final sanding is all done by hand. The finished product reflects both the creativity and effort.

A farmhouse in a rural village provided both a challenge and relief from big city life.

together in their earlier days, before differences caused them to part. Throughout their lives, according to Jess, they argued between themselves about every subject imaginable. If Sixten used a 4 mm drill for the air passage, Poul would use 3.6. Poul concentrated on classical pipe shapes; Sixten focused on what we today call freehand pipes.

Jess studied with Sixten for two years, until he was drafted for 18 months of mandatory military service. (To his delight, he found himself in the cavalry, riding and caring for horses.) Six more months with Sixten after his discharge to get his hands back in shape and Jess and his father started their own workshop. Then, in 1972 Jess started his own workshop to start building his own name, although he continued to help his father when needed for six or seven years.

His father made many of the machines he used to make the classical shapes he learned from Rasmussen. When he closed his workshop in 1992, Jess took the machines and now uses them in his work. "You can't buy machines made for making pipes. They have to be made by a man who works in mechanics. You can't buy a drill for a tobacco hole. We don't make pipes in the industrial way, so you have to make everything yourself or have someone make it for you. That's why I keep it. Also, it belonged to my father." (Jess' father passed away last year.)

The most complicated machine in the workshop is used to drill the tobacco chamber and the air passage. It is unusual in that the block of briar is locked into a form and then spun while the bit remains stationary, rather than the other way around. Other machinery is generally limited to sanding disks and buffing wheels.

Both Jess and his father fulfilled dreams of moving from the center of Copenhagen into rural areas, far from the noise, clutter and smells of the big city. Jess and Bonnie, his wife, moved about 40 miles south, to the small town of Bråby. That was 30 years ago, about the same time that Jess started making pipes on his own.

The house they bought had been part of a huge agricultural estate. With modern mechanization, the estate no longer needed the hundreds of houses it had built for its workers and sold some to the public.

It was a challenge! There was no running water in the house. Toilet facilities were two dilapidated outhouses that held buckets. The contents of the buckets, in turn, were emptied on the garden and worked into the soil.

In the process of rebuilding and modernizing the now comfortable house, Jess and Bonnie became familiar with just about every rock and board.

Where the two outhouses stood, Jess built his workshop. Behind the house and in front of the workshop is a flower garden with a patio for sitting

The thatched roof on the Chonowitsch farmhouse is thick and strong, just like the rest of the structure. Behind the house, a comfortable workshop was built for creating pipes.

in the evenings. All around them neighbors raise chickens, pigs and other animals, so meat and eggs can often be bought just a few steps away.

Daughters Sara, 24, and Julie, 21, grew up under the thatched roof, sheltered by the thick walls. While Bonnie was building a career as a designer of store windows in surrounding towns, Jess was always at home when the children left for school and when they returned. The sisters spent many hours in the workshop with their father, building a close relationship.

Today, Sara is taking classes that will enable her to work with handicapped children. Julie, in turn, is learning flower design. Jess and Julie have talked about pipemaking, but Jess has insisted that she learn another way of making a living before learning to make pipes. "This business is so unpredictable that she needs a way of supporting herself during the slow times," says Jess.

With Sixten's teachings and examples firmly lodged deep within, Jess is open to each concept that comes into his mind. This is a luxury that isn't open to many pipemakers, who are limited to creating the same models over and over for a set market.

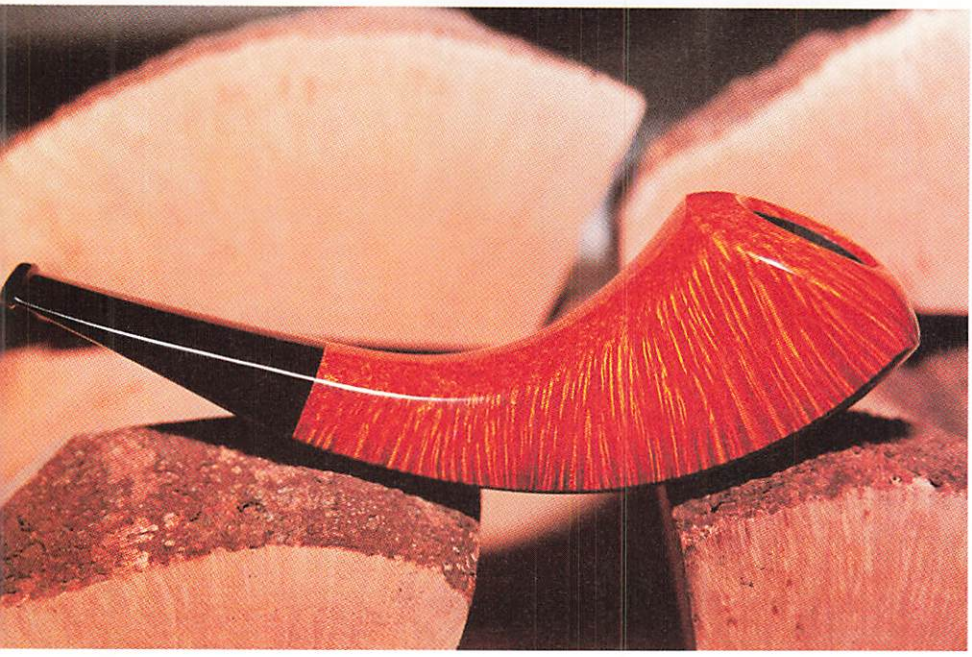
"Pipemaking has been much easier for me during the last 10 years. Now I have a lot of customers all over the world. That means I can make many different shapes and sizes and still have a market for them. The smaller shapes go to Japan, the larger to the United States and Germany. Classical shapes or really beautiful pieces of briar go to Switzerland and northern Italy. It is important to know that if I make a beautiful pipe, there is always somewhere to sell it. Under these conditions there is a lot more freedom to create than there was in the beginning."

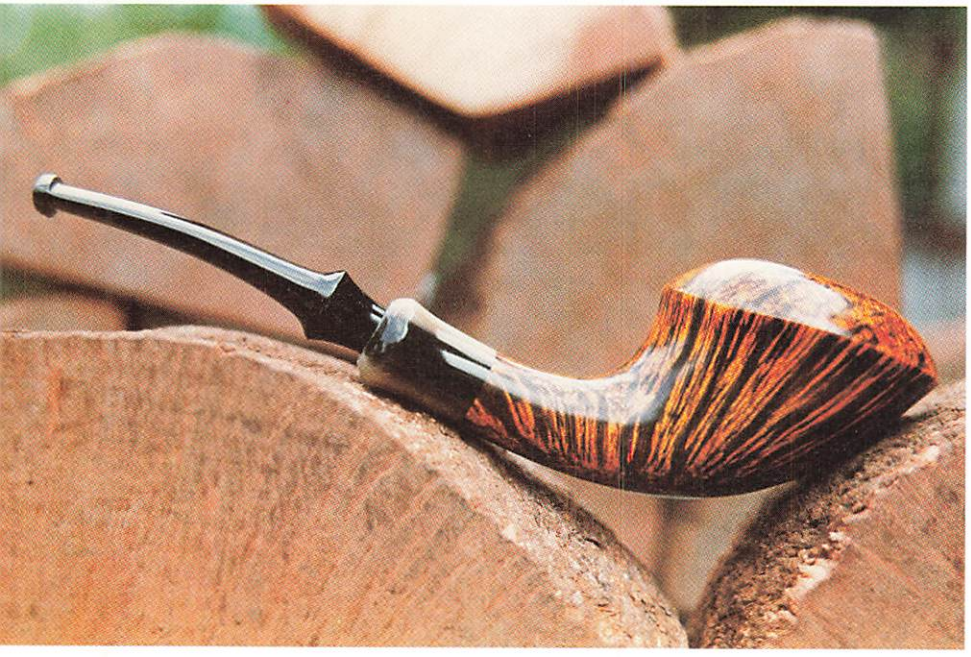
Although Jess strives for perfection in every pipe, every now and then he creates a pipe that is extra special. Usually no more than one or two pipes a year, and in some years none, fit the criteria. Those pipes he identifies with a special "bird" stamp. Why a bird?

"See that pigeon house out that window? Every day that I have worked here for 30 years there have been pigeons outside. It couldn't be anything other than a bird!"

While working, Jess is constantly putting his favorite quarter-bent pipe into his mouth, lighting it, taking a couple of puffs and then putting it down. "I'd never do well in a long smoking contest," he says. "I keep putting my pipe down and then I have to relight it again...and again. I like the quarter-bents because they feel good in my mouth at the angle in which I work."

Jess' favorite tobaccos are primarily Virginia. His favorite Danish tobacco is heavy on the Virginia with some Oriental...and perique for "spice." While in the U.S. recently he was pleased to discover McClelland's #25 Virginia and #27 Virginia,





both of which possess the Virginia flavor he likes so well.

As is true for all pipemakers, a pipe starts with the purchase of briar. Jess is very particular about the briar he buys, traveling to various sources in Corsica and Greece to make sure each piece is the very best. And he is just as careful about the drying of the briar. To keep the moist briar from cracking, he carefully controls the humidity over a one-and-a-half to two-year period, reducing it very slowly. Some briar is held 10 years or longer, until just the right inspiration comes, requiring that particular block of briar for its completion. "I don't need to work briar that isn't right," says Jess.

"The normal way for me to begin a pipe is to have an idea in my mind. Then I find just the right piece of briar stored away. I know each and every piece of briar and about where it is located. I never start making a pipe because of the grain. If I do, that means I don't get to decide anything. I may get a beautiful straight grain, but it isn't a special shape. The briar then decides the final shape; that's not fun.

"I must decide what I am going to do. That means I must start with the idea in my head and then try to select a piece of briar—or several pieces—that fits the idea. For this reason I am not limited like the factory artisans are. So I tell the briar suppliers, I don't care about the shape of the block as long as it is a beautiful piece of briar, beautiful grain. It is up to me to find the briar that properly matches the pipe in my head."

Few briar providers are able to meet Jess' requirements. And those who do demand high prices. While most pipemakers pay less than $10 for a block of plateaux briar, Jess pays an average of $60 a block, with some costing $80 or more, depending on size and quality.

There are two types of quality in a finished pipe: one of design and finish, and the other technical. In addition to beauty and balance, Jess has

been trained to ensure technical perfection, too. That means an easy smoke.

"If you are a good pipe smoker, you know that some pipes smoke better than others. In some pipes there is not enough air. The mouthpiece may be too bent, too narrow or drilled improperly—the airflow is somehow obstructed. There can also be a problem with uneven burning of tobacco if the air hole does not connect directly in the center of the bottom of the tobacco chamber.

"If there isn't enough air through the air passage, you have to draw so hard you increase the temperature in the tobacco. As a result, it burns your tongue. I use a 4 mm drill—the hole is a little bigger than the drill—in the shank. I use a 3 mm drill in the mouthpiece and widen it out at the outlet. It is important that the airflow be unobstructed by anything from the bowl into the mouth.

"A smoker can detect a potential of poor airflow sometimes by blowing into a pipe. If there is a high whistling sound—not everyone can hear it—then there isn't enough air. You must be able to blow slowly without any problem or any whistling."

"A pipe buyer should also consider the kind of tobacco he or she smokes when picking a pipe. For example, if you prefer flake tobacco, you need a pipe with thick walls to deal with the greater heat generated. If you want to smoke very loose tobacco, then you need a bigger air hole in the pipe. A thicker-walled pipe is necessary if you want to use it outside walking in the mountains, hunting or sailing. A thin-walled pipe would be a disaster for these activities. You should tell your tobacconist the kind of tobacco you plan to smoke in a pipe you are considering so he can advise you properly," Jess advises.

In addition to smooth pipes, Jess creates some beautiful sandblasted pipes. "I only make them when I have to. When a flaw shows up at the last minute in an otherwise perfect pipe, I sandblast the pipe so I can get paid for all the work I put into it. It is also a practical form. It is convenient to have a sandblasted pipe if you are going hunting or into the mountains or fishing. You can put a sandblasted pipe in your pocket with keys or other things and it won't be harmed. It gives a good smoke because it has more surface and smokes cooler.

He also will make pipes to order. Usually it takes between two and six months—with an average of three—to fill the order. Time depends on the length of the waiting list and the difficulty of the project.

Although Jess is very aware of and interested in his pipe-smoking clients, there are several things that don't fit the variety of models in his head, including rustication and filters.

"I don't rusticate pipes because I want nature to decide how the pipe will look. When I use sand I always follow the grain in the briarwood. If I were to rusticate, then I am creating a surface that is not normal to the briar.

"I also don't make filter pipes, even though I sell many of my pipes in Germany. With a filter pipe, I can't connect the mouthpiece and the bowl properly. I try to explain to my customers to smoke a little less, but smoke better. With a filter, you cannot take tobacco the same way."

Jess has been making pipes for 30 of his 49 years. Although it is not a vocation with which a person can become rich, it does provide special benefits. As he sits in his workshop, quietly and deliberately working with his strong, capable hands, there is a sense of peace and "rightness" about him.

"Making pipes is very satisfying," says Jess. "A special benefit was having one of us home when the children were small. That was extremely important to them.

"It's also nice to work with my hands. Of course, I can't do anything else now; it's the only education I have. But I never get tired of making pipes. Whenever I pick up a new block of briarwood, I can find a whole world in it. I have to think about the shape, look at the briar and then start. It's never the same." *P&T*

In the United States, Jess Chonowitsch pipes are available only through Marty Pulver's Sherlock's Haven, 275 Battery Street, San Francisco, CA 94111, telephone 415.362.1405, and Uptown's Smoke Shops, 3900 Hillsboro Road, Nashville, TN 37215, pipeline telephone: 615.292.9576.

NOMENCLATURE

Jess pipes are stamped with the name Chonowitsch in a circle at the top, Denmark at the bottom and Jess in the center. As described in the article, a few select pipes are also marked with a bird stamp. No other nomenclature is used. Jess pipes can be distinguished from those made by his father by the fact the father used only the name CHONOWITSCH, in straight block letters. All Chonowitsch pipes made since 1992 have been made by Jess.

(Note: Chonowitsch isn't a Danish name. His grandfather, Julius, a Russian classical violinist, was performing in Denmark when the Russian revolution broke out. He remained in Denmark, fell in love with and married his Danish piano accompanist. As a teenager, Jess was also musically inclined. In contrast, however, he played drums in a Beatles-style rock band that toured all over Denmark. The senior Chonowitsch was noticeably upset by the direction of Jess' music, but is credited with never voicing his disappointment.)

"Whenever I pick up a new block of briar, I can find a whole world in it."

—*Jess*

With his background in both classical and freehand approaches, Jess moves comfortably back and forth across the line between the two, as shown in the pipes on the opposite page. However, the final results are both very Danish and very Chonowitsch.

Mark Twain

The first truly authentic American literary voice drew inspiration from genius, experience, exasperation and tobacco

by Chuck Stanion

"Nothing so needs reforming as other people's habits."

"I smoke a good deal," wrote Mark Twain in 1891, "that is to say, all the time." It was not an exaggeration. He bought cigars by the barrel and pipes by the gross.

Called by his grandniece, Jean Webster, "the smokiest man" she could remember, and "a human furnace," Twain was known to smoke as many as 30 cigars a day and intersperse them with pipes. "I do not know how much a man may smoke and live," wrote Twain's friend William Dean Howells, "but apparently he smoked as much as a man could, for he smoked incessantly."

Born Samuel Langhorne Clemens in Florida, Missouri, in 1835 and raised on the banks of the Mississippi River in Hannibal, Missouri, Twain reported that he "was a sickly and precarious and tiresome and uncertain child, and lived mainly on allopathic medicines during the first seven years of my life." But at age seven, peer pressure induced him to try tobacco, and his constitution improved to the point where he would later use his robust health as a justification for refusing to quit smoking.

That first introduction to tobacco is related in Twain's "Autobiography":

> *It is the part of my education which I look back upon with the most satisfaction. My first visit to the school was when I was seven. A strapping girl of fifteen, in the customary sunbonnet and calico dress, asked me if I 'used tobacco'—meaning did I chew it. I said, no. It roused her scorn. She reported me to all the crowd, and said—*
>
> *"Here is a boy seven years old who can't chaw tobacco.'*
>
> *By the looks and comments which this produced, I realized I was a degraded object; I was cruelly ashamed of myself. I determined to reform.*

That reform was immediate, passionate and long-lasting, as Clemens embarked on a 67-year-long relationship with tobacco. "I was not able to learn to chew tobacco," he writes. "I learned to smoke fairly well, but that did not conciliate anybody."

Actually, Clemens did learn to chew, and this example introduces an interesting aspect of Mark Twain—it is difficult to use his writings to glean biographical information, because he alters his facts according to the requisites of the literary situation. Sam Clemens is the man; Mark Twain is a construct, a writing tool, an identity invented by Clemens to better execute his distinctive brand of writing.

That is why Mark Twain can write:

> *When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one,*

Photo courtesy of the Mark Twain Boyhood Home in Hannibal, Missouri.

"Heaven goes by favor. If it went by merit, you would stay out and your dog would go in."

I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years.

A pithy message, presented with humor, even though Sam Clemens' father, John Clemens, died when Sam was only 12.

And that is why Twain can claim in his autobiography that he never learned to chew tobacco, in his dictations to his secretary that he quit chewing tobacco while a riverboat pilot on the Mississippi, and in an 1875 sketch called "History Repeats Itself" that he heeded his grandmother's warning about the evils of chewing tobacco:

How well I remember my grandmother's asking me not to use tobacco, good old soul! She said, "You're at it again, are you, you whelp? Now, don't ever let me catch you chewing tobacco before breakfast again, or I lay I'll blacksnake you within an inch of your life!" I have never touched it at that hour of the morning from that time to the present day.

These contradictions are part of what make up the legendary duality of Mark Twain. A Southerner from a slave-holding family who fought (briefly) for the South in the Civil War, he later helped Ulysses S. Grant publish his memoirs, which saved Grant's family from financial ruin.

A Western laborer and miner, he was a hard-drinking, hard-smoking, profane, unrefined bohemian who married into society, craved respectability and became an esteemed businessman, publisher and author.

A satirist of the Gilded Age and its money-grubbing audacity, he longed for great affluence, lusting not just for financial independence, but outrageous, immense Aladdinesque wealth. Renowned for his bitter, despairing cynicism (somewhat unmerited), he is yet best known for making people laugh. This is the complexity in the Clemens/Twain personality that has garnered the fascination of six generations of readers and scholars.

Clemens was a man of many vocations: printer, riverboat pilot, silver and gold miner, newspaperman, lecturer, world-traveling correspondent, humorist, publisher, inventor, speculator, novelist, man of letters, American icon—but he had one identity that never altered: he was resolutely, inflexibly, unshakably a smoker.

Born in tobacco country, where "poverty itself was able to buy" tobacco, Clemens spent two to three months every year during his youth at his Uncle John Quarles' farm, on which—among other crops—tobacco was grown and cured. Hannibal, too, where Clemens spent the other part of the year, boasted a tobacco factory. But even considering tobacco's easy accessibility during his youth, Clemens became a man more captivated with tobacco than most.

"Let me tell you briefly the history of my personal relation to tobacco," he wrote. "It began, I think, when I was a lad, and took the form of a quid, which I became expert in tucking under my tongue. Afterward I learned the delights of the pipe, and I suppose there was no other youngster of my age who could more deftly cut plug tobacco so as to make it available for pipe-smoking."

If we may infer that the fiction of Mark Twain reflects something of the life of Samuel Clemens, a look at Huckleberry Finn and Tom Sawyer will reveal the significance of pipe smoking to the young Clemens, for these two great characters in literature are smokers in an authentic sense: their smoking is not flaunted, it is not an afterthought or mere literary device; it is integral to their dispositions.

At the beginning of "Huckleberry Finn," smoking is one of the first issues that emphasize Huck's discontent with being "sivilized" by the Widow Douglas, who takes him into her home. He doesn't like the clothes, or the food, or the Bible lessons, and especially doesn't like the smoking regulations:

Pretty soon I wanted to smoke, and asked the widow to let me. But she wouldn't. She said it was a mean practice and wasn't clean, and I must try to not do it any more. That is just the way with some people. They get down on a thing when they don't know nothing about it. Here she was a-bothering about Moses, which was no kin to her, and no use to anybody, being gone, you see, yet finding a power of fault with me for doing a thing that had some good in it. And she took snuff, too; of course that was all right, because she done it herself.

Part of Huck's charm is that he takes note of the hypocrisy all around him, but still maintains an innocent, nonjudgmental attitude. Later, for example, at the most important juncture of the novel, when he decides, "All right, I'll go to hell" instead of turning the runaway slave Jim over to the authorities, it is himself he chastises for moral turpitude instead of the insane society that allows such oppression.

In "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," when Tom, Huck and Joe Harper have run away from home, Huck teaches his friends to smoke corncob pipes, and while Tom and Joe profess a love for the new pastime, they get gradually more and more sick from it, and have to crawl away and sleep it off—but Huck revels. And since Huck is the single most independent character in the novel, smoking in a way symbolizes independence from the restrictions of civilization.

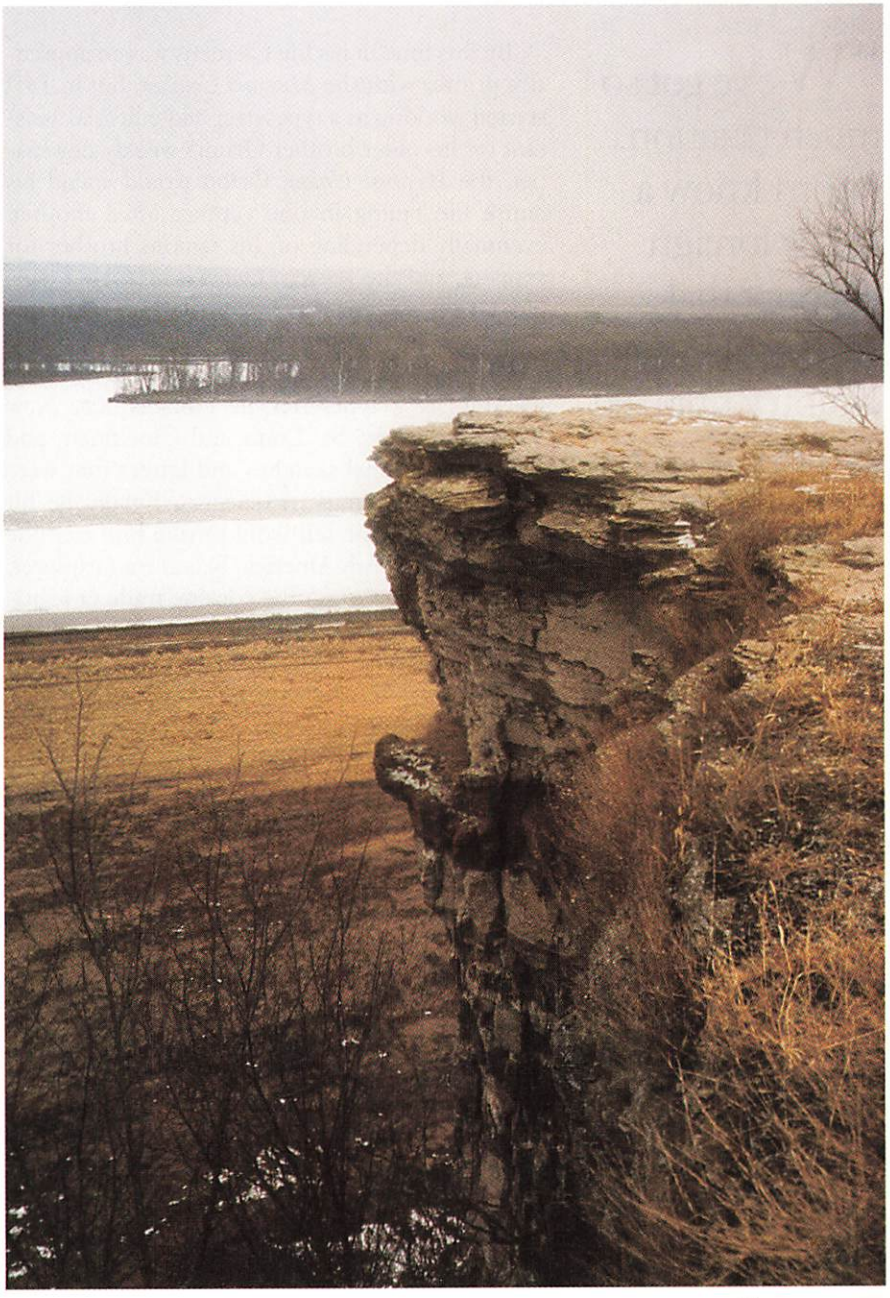
But Tom recovers from his first smoking experience, and is an avid smoker in the sequel, "Tom Sawyer Abroad." So invested is he in his smoking, in fact, that he puts a temporary stop to his balloon exploration of the world for the sake of a pipe, as Huck Finn narrates:

But we had an accident, now, and it fetched all the plans to a standstill. Tom's old ornery corncob pipe had got so old and swelled and warped that she couldn't hold together any longer, notwithstanding the strings and bandages, but caved in and went to pieces. Tom he didn't know what to do. The professor's pipe wouldn't answer; it warn't anything but a mershum, and a person that's got used to a cob pipe knows it lays a long ways over all the other pipes in this world, and you can't get him to smoke any other. He wouldn't take mine, I couldn't persuade him. So there he was.

It is a tragedy, and the adventure cannot go on until a replacement pipe is found. Tom wants to scour Egypt and Arabia for a new corncob, but the guide says it is an impossible mission. So the explorers put down on Mount Sinai and send Jim and the guide back home for a "nearly new" corncob Tom has left in his kitchen.

With the balloon traveling at 300 miles per hour, Tom estimates, Jim will be back and Tom can be comfortably smoking again by the next day. "There ain't no occasion to fool around," he says. "I want a smoke, and the quicker you fetch that pipe the better."

Smoking was just as important to the young Sam Clemens when he was Tom and Huck's age. He smoked constantly, though there were occasions when he slowed down and even stopped—temporarily. For three solid months in 1850, when Clemens was 15 years old, he pledged to



At the foot of Hannibal's "Cardiff Hill" stand Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer, a monument to Twain's depiction of American boyhood. In Huck's hip pocket is the unmistakable outline of a pipe whose reed stem protrudes a quarter inch into the light. Lover's Leap, below, offers Hannibal's finest view of the great Mississippi River.

stop smoking and chewing tobacco (and stop drinking and swearing) so that he could wear the red merino sash of the Hannibal chapter of the Cadets of Temperance, a group of high moral character that marched on May Day and the Fourth of July. "But you can't keep a juvenile moral institution alive on two displays of its sash per year," writes Twain.

As a private, I could not have held out beyond one procession, but I was Illustrious Grand Worthy Secretary and Royal Inside Sentinel, and had the privilege of inventing passwords and of wearing a rosette on my sash. Under these conditions, I was enabled to remain steadfast until I had gathered the glory of two displays. Then I resigned straightaway.

I had not smoked for three full months, and no words can adequately describe the smoke appetite that was consuming me.

"We've got so much taxation. I don't know a single foreign product that enters this country untaxed except the answer to a prayer."

By this time in his life Clemens was an apprentice printer with the *Missouri Courier*, but in 1851 started working as a typesetter and editorial assistant for his older brother Orion's weekly newspaper, the *Western Union*. Orion would spend his entire life failing in one venture after another, eventually depending on his famous brother for support, and the *Western Union* is an early example; Orion was never able to make enough money to pay Sam his promised $3.50 per week salary.

Leaving Hannibal in 1853, Clemens traveled, working as a typesetter in Philadelphia, New York, Muscatine, St. Louis and Cincinnati, and writing occasional sketches and letters that were published in various newspapers. Finally he hit upon a scheme he felt would make him rich: he would go to South America, become an explorer, and perhaps get in on the cocaine trade (a legitimate business in that time).

But during the steamboat trip to New Orleans, an old ambition returned, and after hounding the riverboat pilot, Horace Bixby (a "lightning pilot" who was still on the river in 1913), for hundreds of river miles, he finally got Bixby to take him on as an apprentice. Clemens' education as a cub pilot and his piloting experiences are related in his book, "Life on the Mississippi."

It took two years to earn his pilot's license, and he spent an additional two years in this profession that he claimed to love more than any other he subsequently followed. Then the Civil War disrupted river traffic. Afraid that he might be impressed as a Union gunboat pilot, Clemens went home to Hannibal, helped form the Marion Rangers—a group of Confederate volunteers comprised mainly of his old school chums—blundered around in the woods for two weeks retreating from rumors of Union armies, and then retired from the Confederacy. "And the Confederacy fell," he would later wryly remark.

Orion had been appointed secretary of the Nevada Territory that year, and Clemens decided to accompany his brother west as his personal secretary, paying both their fares, since Orion, characteristically, could not afford it.

Clemens' adventures in the west became the raw material for his book "Roughing It," in which there is one pipe smoking-related sketch of particular interest, when the narrator is motivated to quit smoking.

Caught at night in the desert in a violent snowstorm, he and his two companions, convinced of their imminent demise, determine to reform their bad habits, if only for the few hours remaining them. One throws his deck of cards into the snow, the other his bottle of whiskey, leaving only the narrator to follow: "We were all sincere, and all deeply moved and earnest, for we were in the presence of death and without hope. I threw away my pipe."

However, their reform is short-lived—because they are not. Morning reveals that they are directly outside the stage station. "I have scarcely exaggerated a detail of this curious and absurd adventure," writes Twain. "We actually went into camp in a snowdrift in a desert, at midnight in a storm, forlorn and hopeless, within fifteen steps of a comfortable inn."

For two hours we sat apart in the station and ruminated in disgust. The mystery was gone, now, and it was plain enough why the horses had deserted us. Without a doubt they were under that shed a quarter of a minute after they had left us, and they must have overheard and enjoyed all our confessions and lamentations.

After breakfast we felt better, and the zest for life soon came back.... Presently an uneasiness came over me—grew upon me—assailed me without ceasing. Alas, my regeneration was not complete—I wanted to smoke!

The narrator discovers how easy it is to reform when about to die; how hard it is when faced with a full life. "I shortly found myself sneaking among the snowdrifts hunting for my pipe." Ashamed of his weakness, he hides in the barn to smoke his pipe. "As I turned the corner, smoking, Ollendorff turned the other with his bottle to his lips, and between us sat the unconscious Ballou deep in a game of 'solitaire' with the greasy old cards! Absurdity could go no farther. We shook hands and agreed to say no more about 'reform' and 'examples to the rising generation.'"

Unable to secure a fortune through mining and speculation, Clemens began writing for various western newspapers, including Virginia City's *Territorial Enterprise* and Carson City's *Silver* Age, for the first time using the pseudonym "Mark

Twain" in an 1863 letter to the *Enterprise*.

He continued to travel, and in 1865 found himself in Angels Camp in Calaveras County, where he first heard the story of the jumping frog, which he would immortalize through his use of deadpan delivery.

His reputation as a writer began to grow when he became a correspondent for the *Sacramento Union*, writing letters back from the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii). It was upon his return to California that he started lecturing on the Sandwich Islands, and discovered his monumental talent for the lecture platform.

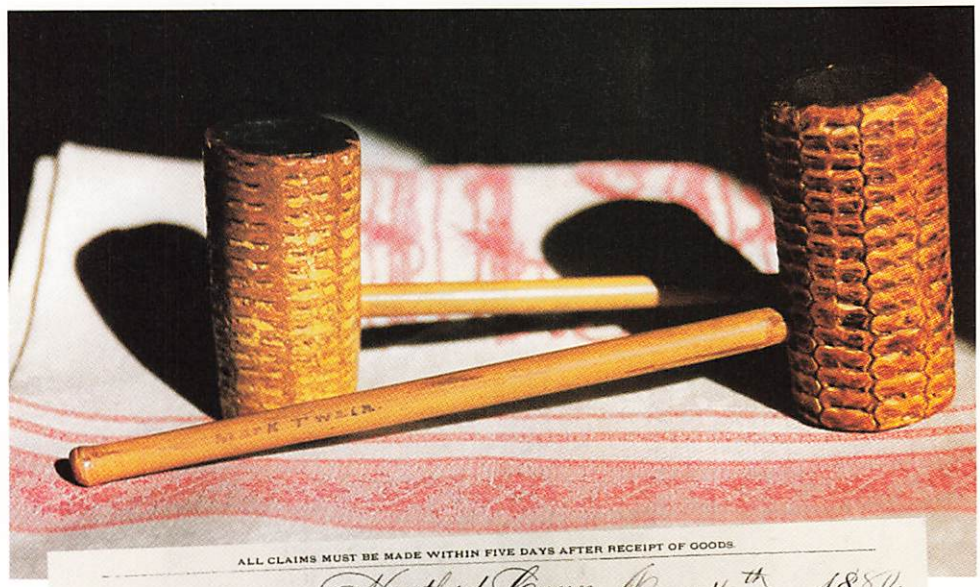
And finally, in 1867, he embarked on the trip that would launch his career as a writer of books and introduce him to his future wife: the Quaker City excursion to the Holy Land.

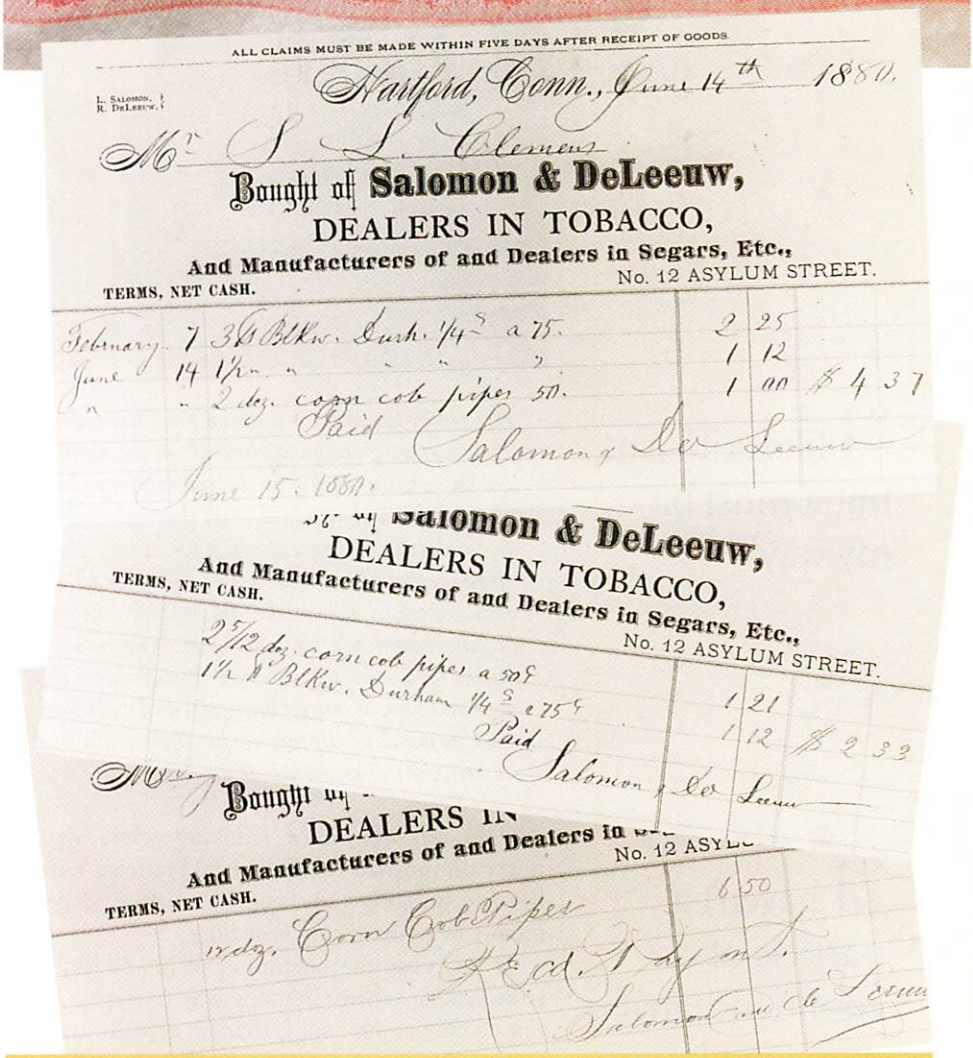
The Quaker City was a paddlewheel steamship, and its cruise to the Holy Land was organized by Henry Ward Beecher's church. Clemens made arrangements to act as correspondent for the San Francisco *Alta California*, which paid his fare in exchange for his travel letters about the trip. It was a whirlwind five-month tour, and Clemens' letters were full of satire and sarcasm concerning his fellow passengers and the sights in the Old World.

On that trip he met Charley Langdon, who showed Clemens an ivory miniature of his sister, Olivia. Clemens later claimed that he fell in love with Olivia at that moment, but that is open to speculation. He only reported the episode decades later, and it has such a flavor of the myth and legend of Mark Twain that it is tempting to suspect embellishment. At any rate, he was able to meet Olivia after his return, and courted her over the following year, much to the dismay of her parents.

He also began "The Innocents Abroad" that year, a book based on his travel letters recounting his adventures on the Quaker City excursion. The writing of the book was an arduous task, and we have an eyewitness account of Clemens' writing process during its composition. An unidentified journalist for the *New York Evening Post* visited Clemens while he was working on the manuscript:

> *And there was Mark Twain in a little back room, with a sheet-iron stove, a dirty, musty carpet of the cheapest description, a bed, and two or three common chairs. The little drum stove was full of ashes, running over on the zinc sheet; the bed seemed to be unmade for a week, the slops had not been carried out for a fortnight, the room was foul with tobacco smoke, the floor, dirty enough to begin with, was littered with newspapers, from which Twain had cut his letters. Then there were hundreds of pieces of torn manuscripts which had been written and then*

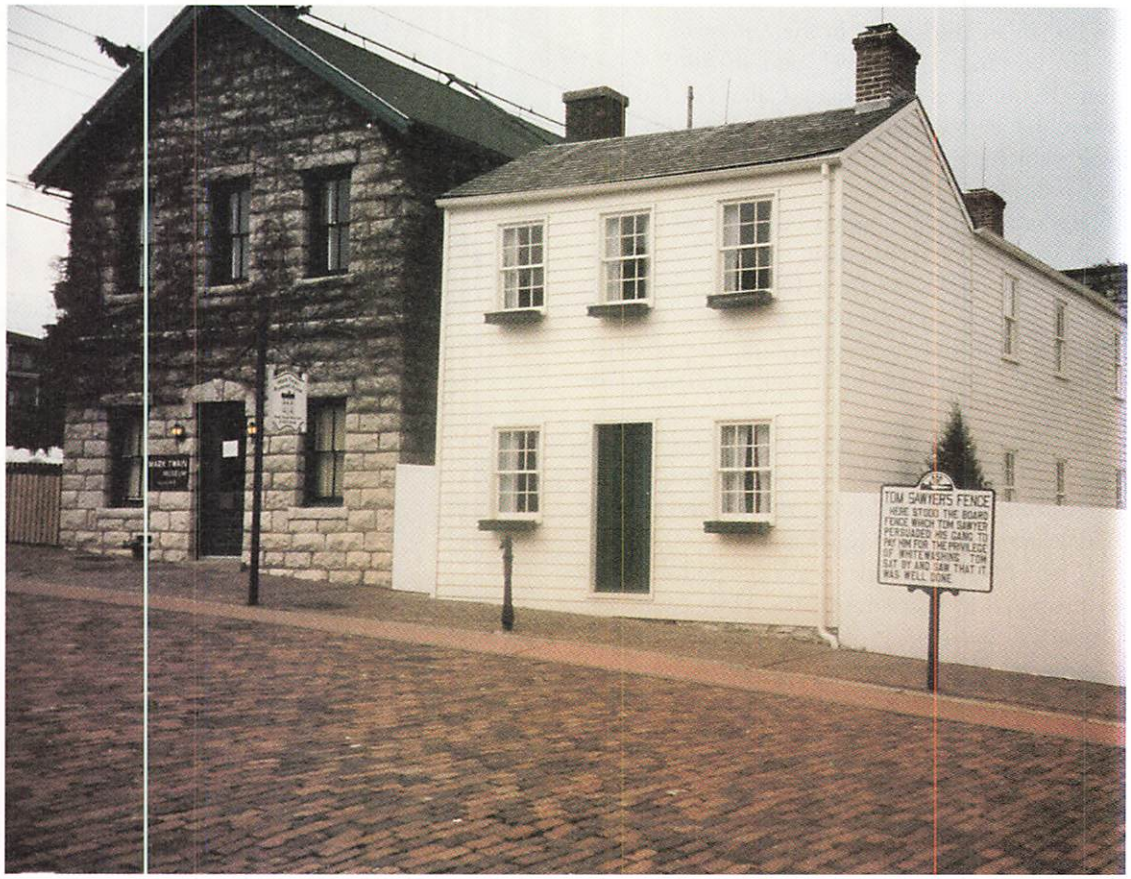



ALL CLAIMS MUST BE MADE WITHIN FIVE DAYS AFTER RECEIPT OF GOODS.
Hartford, Conn., June 14th 1880.
Bought of Salomon & DeLeeuw,
DEALERS IN TOBACCO,
And Manufacturers of and Dealers in Segars, Etc.,
No. 12 ASYLUM STREET.
TERMS, NET CASH.
Paid
Salomon & DeLeeuw
Bought of Salomon & DeLeeuw,
DEALERS IN TOBACCO,
And Manufacturers of and Dealers in Segars, Etc.,
No. 12 ASYLUM STREET.
TERMS, NET CASH.
Paid
Salomon & DeLeeuw

As these receipts emphasize, Blackwell's Durham was one of Twain's favorite pipe tobaccos, and corncob pipes were a favorite medium for smoking it. The pipes pictured above were Twain's own and are currently housed in the Mark Twain Museum in Hartford. The receipt photos are courtesy The Mark Twain Project, The Bancroft Library.

Twain often stocked up on smoking supplies before traveling, especially to Europe. In his journal from 1879 he notes that there is "No good smoking tobacco in Europe—no Durham, Vanity F, Lone Jack—but I brought mine with me—been over before."

In a later journal entry Twain reports: "Gave away all my Durham & kept the worst brand in America—still it was of course better than any in Europe—Latakie is almost as good."



Clemens' boyhood home still stands in Hannibal, along with his father's law office. Tour information is available by calling the Mark Twain Boyhood Home at 573.221.9010.

"I like criticism, but it must be my way."

"I haven't a particle of confidence in a man who has no redeeming petty vices."

rejected by the author. A dozen pipes were about the apartment on the washstand, on the mantel, on the writing table, on the chairs everywhere that room could be found. And there was tobacco, and tobacco everywhere. One thing, there were no flies. The smoke killed them, and I am now surprised the smoke did not kill me too. Twain would not let a servant come into his room. He would strip down to his suspenders (his coat and vest, of course, being off) and walk back and forward in slippers in his little room and swear and smoke the whole day long.

The importance of smoking while writing never diminished for Clemens. He tried curtailing his smoking only one more time, and was unable to write during that time.

It was near the beginning of his relationship with Olivia, when Clemens was trying to be as respectable as he could, that he actually tried to make himself over to some extent, for her sake. She disapproved of smoking, swearing, drinking, and even humorists—that is to say, she disapproved of Clemens' whole life. "Poor girl," he would write, "anybody who would convince her that I was not a humorist would secure her eternal gratitude. She thinks a humorist is something pretty awful."

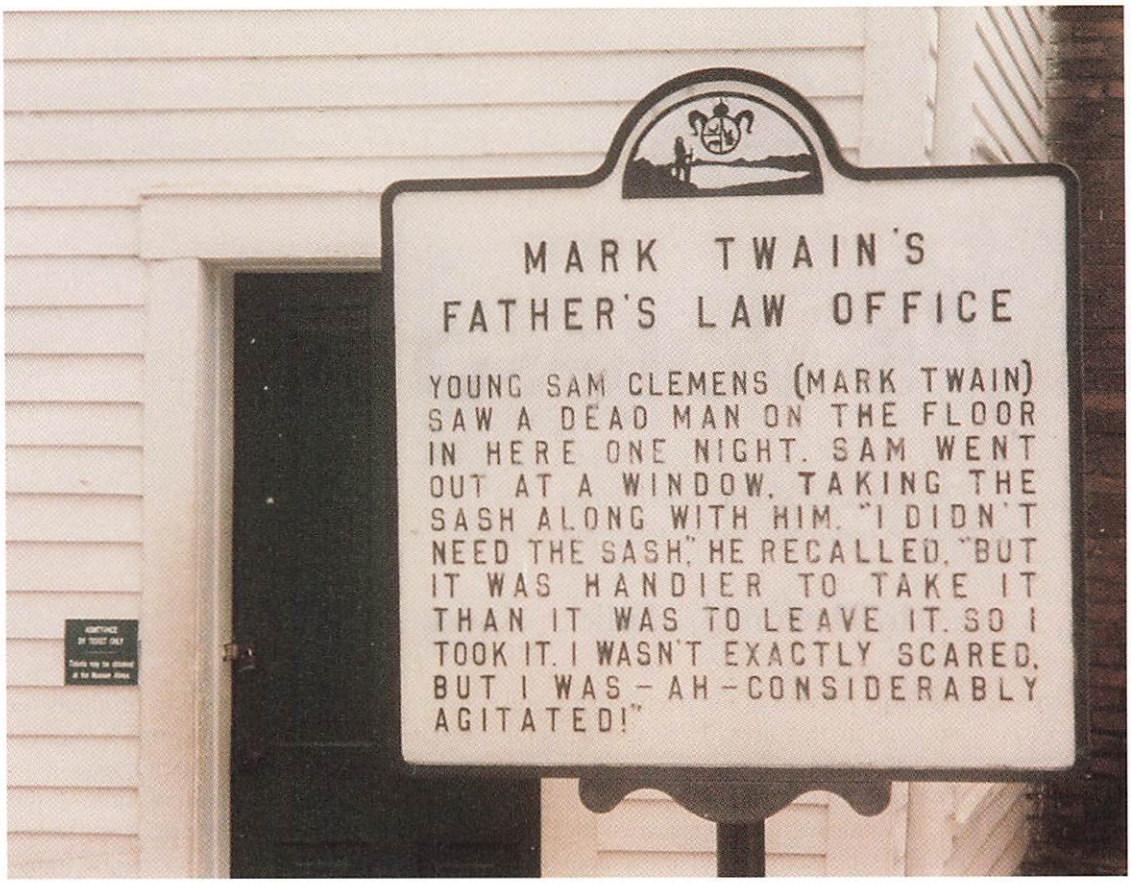
It was rough going. Olivia's parents wanted letters of reference before consenting to the marriage, and the letters that came back from the West were not complimentary. "Clemens is a humbug," wrote a San Francisco clergyman, "a man with talent, no doubt, but will make trivial use of it." Another letter professed the expectation that Clemens "would fill a drunkard's grave." But Clemens insisted that he did not "live backwards," that his character was improved, that his future was what should be considered. The Langdons believed him, and consented to the marriage.

Clemens gave up hard liquor, a pledge that lasted about a year. He quit slouching around with his hands in his pockets. He took up Biblical readings and started attending church. But he steadfastly refused to stop smoking, although he made insinuations, at first, that he might. He wrote to Olivia:

> *I do not know anything I could refuse you if you wanted it done. I am reasonably afraid that you'll stop me from smoking, some day, but if you ever do, you will do it with such a happy grace that I shall be swindled into the notion that I didn't want to smoke any more, anyhow!*

"After all," he would later joke, "what does tobacco matter? Let's have another chapter of Deuteronomy." However, in another letter he amended that notion: "There is no argument that can have even a feather's weight with me against smoking."

Clemens made his living as a lecturer during his engagement to Olivia, and did not enjoy the traveling or the accomodations that were some-


MARK TWAIN'S
FATHER'S LAW OFFICE
YOUNG SAM CLEMENS (MARK TWAIN)
SAW A DEAD MAN ON THE FLOOR
IN HERE ONE NIGHT. SAM WENT
OUT AT A WINDOW, TAKING THE
SASH ALONG WITH HIM. "I DIDN'T
NEED THE SASH," HE RECALLED, "BUT
IT WAS HANDIER TO TAKE IT
THAN IT WAS TO LEAVE IT. SO I
TOOK IT. I WASN'T EXACTLY SCARED,
BUT I WAS - AH - CONSIDERABLY
AGITATED!"

"Chastity—it can be carried too far."

"Fleas can be taught nearly anything that a Congressman can."

"My works are like water. The works of the great masters are like wine. But everyone drinks water."

times forced upon him. He was often the guest of prominent people along his route, and it rankled him no end when the rules of their homes required that he refrain from smoking:

> *I talked last night in Canton, & had the hospitalities of Mr. Ames...inflicted on me—& it is the last time I will stop in a New England private house. Their idea of hospitality is to make themselves comfortable first, & leave the guest to get along if he can. No smoking allowed on the premises...I hate Mr. Ames with all my heart.*

Even when he is in better humor, and more tolerant of his nonsmoking hosts, Clemens' resentment is evident:

> *At the hospitable mansion where I am a guest, I have to smoke surreptitiously when all are in bed, to save my reputation, and then draw suspicion upon the cat when the family detect the unfamiliar odor. I never was so absurdly proper in the broad light of day in my life...so far, I am safe; but I am sorry to say that the cat has lost caste.*

Shortly after his marriage to Olivia, when he and his bride had settled in Buffalo, New York, and Clemens had become part owner of a newspaper, his father-in-law Jervis Langdon offered Clemens $10,000 to stop smoking and drinking ale—since he had already given up hard liquor. Twain biographer Justin Kaplan reports:

> *Clemens rejected the bribe—"I can't sell myself," he told Langdon—but he did cut down his smoking drastically, to Sunday afternoons only.... He came almost to a full stop as a writer that year, but by the spring of 1871, when he decided to reject all the conditions of his life in Buffalo and commit himself full time to writing "Roughing It," he had resumed his normal pace of constant smoking through the day and some drinking at night. "If I had sold myself," he said to James T. Fields in 1876, after telling him about Langdon's offer, "I couldn't have written my book, or I couldn't have gone to sleep, but now everything works perfectly well."*

Things were indeed going well for Clemens. He was a respected, best-selling author, a famous lecturer, a business owner. He lived in a mansion with a beautiful, rich wife and more servants than family. He was just coming into his most powerful years as a writer.

But his life was half over, and his good fortune was about to change. *P&T*

This ends Part I of our two-part series on Mark Twain. In our next issue we will describe Twain's rise to worldwide popularity, his financial ruin and subsequent years as an American expatriate, his battle with despair after the loss of all but one member of his immediate family, and finally his financial, literary and personal recovery from his life's tragedies.

Italy's Varesotto

This beautiful region in northwest Italy is home to numerous outstanding pipemakers

by Dayton H. Matlick

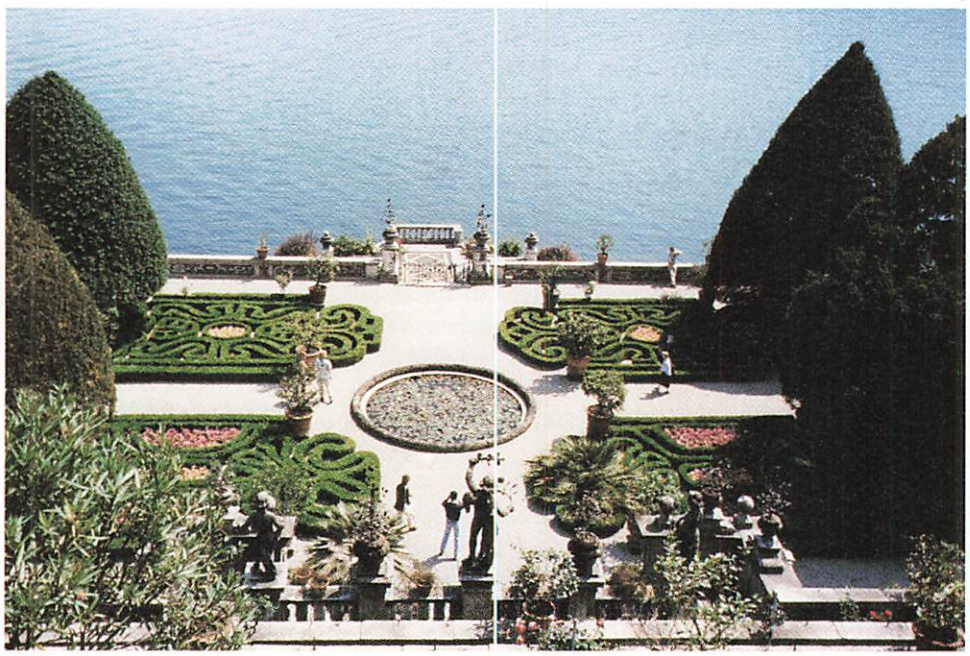
In addition to being the source today of many outstanding pipemakers, the Varesotto area in northwestern Italy has long been an important area within Europe.

The Varesotto sits astride one of the main north-south routes within Europe. Trade, culture and warring factions have used the corridor for thousands of years, molding a unique people in their wake.

A second geographic advantage relates to water. The Varesotto sits on the green of the pre-Alpine slopes. The runoff is the beginning of the great Po River—the industrial plain of Italy. It also feeds a number of beautiful lakes, some of considerable size, which are part of the daily life of a large portion of the people living and working in this area. It is also a major tourist attraction for people from all over the world.

It is this region that spawned the individuals who started the movement that became the Roman Empire. It was warriors from northern Italy who conquered the south and built Rome into a world power.

Located where they were, the rich heritage of these people was forged by their constant exposure to change and new ideas. Today, the residents of the Varesotto exhibit a strong work ethic. This is further strengthened by personal desire to create high-quality products—a desire that has built a worldwide reputation for goods from northern Italy.



The Borromeo civilization flourished in and around Lake Maggiore, covering green islands with sumptuous palaces.

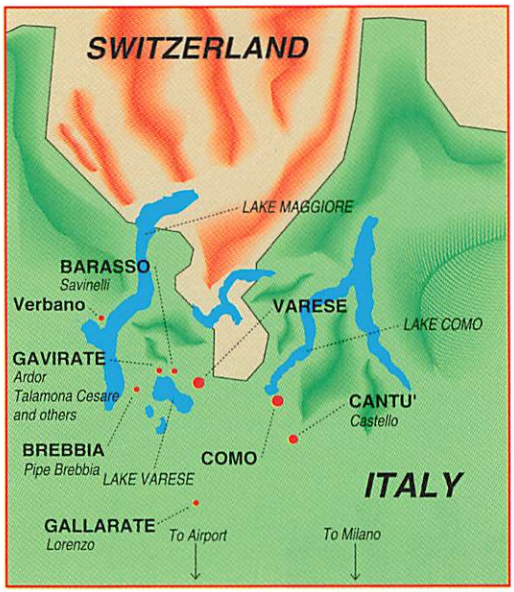
Located on the western side of the Varesotto is Lake Maggiore. Even today, its waters form a major source of transportation between the many cities—large and small—on its shores. Verbano, on the west side of the lake, was the cradle of the Borromeo civilization, with its refined culture. It was in this area that they constructed sumptuous buildings, Italian gardens and the formidable Fortress of Angera. Small islands that once sheltered fishing villages soon held palaces and are today major tourist attractions.

In the center of Varesotto is the smaller Lake Varese with its necklace of small cities, towns and villages. Only a short distance away is the city of Varese, strategically located in the center of this beautiful, productive area.

Further to the east is Como, located at the base of another major lake, Lake Como. Like Lake Maggiore, it is also served by regular, scheduled water transportation that is both pleasant and convenient.

Pipemakers are scattered throughout this area, which is only about two hours drive from east to west. In the map on the opposite page we have indicated the location of some of the many pipemakers in this area. West out of Varese is the town of Barasso, where the Savinelli factory is located. The headquarters is in Milan, the main industrial city of Italy, located only about an hour and a quarter's drive away.

Just beyond Barasso is Gavirate,



home of the Alberto Paronelli private pipe museum, one of the most complete in the world.

At the west end of Lake Varese, a small river flows through the town of Brebbia on the way to Lake Maggiore. Pipe Brebbia is located on that river (see article on page 44 of this issue).

East out of Varese and south of Como is located the city of Cantú, where Castello pipes are manufactured.

These three pipemakers are all celebrating the longevity of their companies in 1997.

Savinelli is celebrating 120 years of service to consumers of tobacco products, most of which was through renowned tobacconist shops in Milan and, later, Genoa. In earlier years, Savinelli contracted with individuals to have its pipes make. In the 1950s, its current factory was built in Barasso near the site of the huge Rossi pipemaking operation.

Rossi was one of the biggest manufacturers of pipes in the world during its heyday. It is said it filled a railroad car each day with its pipes. More than 900 people worked in the sprawling complex.

Rossi pipes were machine made and sold so cheaply they had to stamp "made of genuine briar" on each pipe in an effort to get people to believe a briar pipe could be so inexpensive. In direct contrast to Rossi, Savinelli chose to focus on higher quality and higher price, as did many of the better Italian pipemakers of today.

The reminder of the Rossi operation is there every day for Savinelli workers. The now defunct Rossi operation is close enough it can be seen from Savinelli windows.

Although its pipes are made in Barasso, the headquarters of Savinelli is in downtown Milan, close to the famous Duomo or cathedral. It is also only a block away from the original Savinelli tobacconist shop, opened 120 years ago. The Savinelli business is still operated by direct descendants of the founding father, Achille Savinelli.

Castello was founded in 1947, 50 years ago, by Carlo Scotti in the city of Cantú. Scotti had worked in Switzerland as a tobacconist before moving to Italy. Scotti devoted several years in a search for new approaches to pipemaking before he joined with another pipemaker named Renso. With Scotti's ideas and Renso's gifted hands they formed a partnership that quickly lifted Pipe Castello to the top tiers of Italian pipemakers.

The focus on quality, whether of smooth or rusticated pipes, has made Castello pipes famous among world pipe collectors.

These pipemakers played their own role in the transformation of Italian production from mass-produced, low-priced consumer products, to its current reputation as one of the world leaders in the fabrication of high-quality items.

These are some of the best names in Italian pipemaking and will be the source of articles in future issues. Current plans call for the Savinelli article to be in the Winter issue of P&T, followed by Castello in the Spring issue. *P&T*

Small towns, several boasting pipemakers, sit shoulder to shoulder around the small, but beautiful Lake Varese.

pipe brebbia

Northwest Italy pipemaker with a unique history marks 50 years with a special celebration

by Dayton H. Matlick

Pipe Brebbia is located near the small village in northwest Italy from which it draws its name. Situated between two lakes in one of the most beautiful areas of Italy, the village is within sight of the awe-inspiring Swiss Alps.

The entrance to Pipe Brebbia is just at the edge of this village of 3,200 inhabitants, down a quarter-mile lane bordered on both sides by open fields dotted with clumps of trees. The peace of the place surrounds like a sheltering presence.

The white headquarters building looms straight ahead, two stories tall with one-story wings on either side set forward to create a courtyard. The right section has a large pipe painted on the front, complete with a partly open cap from which smoke curls upward. The left section is newer in appearance, with a drawing of a man working on what looks like an electric motor.

It turns out that the large central building is more than 110 years old—the original building on the site. In addition to housing the pipemaking facilities on the second floor, most of the first floor is a water-powered electric generating plant that has been in operation since the beginning. What do electricity and the electric light have to do with making pipes? The answer in Brebbia is, "A lot!" But it took 67 years for the connection to be made.

It wasn't until 1878 and 1879 that British inventor Thomas Swan and American inventor Thomas Edison simultaneously developed the carbon-filament lamp, which became a commercial success. This was followed in 1881-82 by the New York City installation of a complete electrical distribution system for power and light, designed by Edison.

In an amazingly short time, considering the year and the distance, the impact was felt in little Brebbia. In 1884, progressive-thinking Achille Buzzi built a power plant on a small river running between Lake Varese and Lake Maggiore, a beautiful lake steeped in history.

At first, people in the surrounding rural communities didn't want anything to do with electricity—this work of the Devil. Then the fledgling power company installed free lights on poles in the squares of surrounding villages. Soon the women of the villages were taking their chairs and their handwork into the square at night where they could talk and work together. The age of electricity was launched!

Our story now jumps those 67 years into the future. The Second World War is over and Italy is in shambles. Just about everything from the economy to transportation is barely working. Everything has to be built up again, except the Brebbia power plant, which is still running, as it is today.

Uncle Bernardo Papa has made some astute investments that survived the war better than most. He advises two of his nephews, Enea Buzzi, grandson of Achille Buzzi, and Achille Savinelli, to get involved in something that can be exported to countries with sound economies. Because of the Savinelli family involvement in tobacco and pipes for almost 70 years and Enea Buzzi's love for pipes, the potential of making pipes sparks an immediate interest. The uncle's offer of financial backing settles the discussions.

The building housing the power plant, which now belongs to Enea Buzzi, has a lot of unused space on the second floor and proves to be an excellent site for the fledgling pipe company. It has the additional advantage of free electricity to run needed machinery. It almost seems as

These six pipes, four natural and two walnut, rate AA and AAA in Brebbia's Linea A. The two pipes on the previous page are in the popularly-priced Cellini line.

though the whole development of electricity existed only to set the stage for this pipe drama.

It is decided that Achille Savinelli will live in Milan, where the most important Savinelli tobacconist shop is located, and be in charge of sales and distribution for the new company, while Enea Buzzi will run the pipemaking operation in Brebbia. All pipes made will carry the name of Savinelli and be sold through the Savinelli tobacconist shops.

From its 1947 beginning, the new company decides to go against existing trends. Just a few miles away in Barasso, the enormous Rossi pipe company reputedly turns out a rail car full of pipes every day. However, their 900 employees produce pipes so cheaply they must stamp "made from real briar" on each pipe in an effort to convince the skeptics.

Post World War II Italy is far from the Italy of 1997. The reputation for craftsmanship has yet to be developed. The approach throughout Italy is to make a profit by producing low-quality products as cheaply as possible, making profits based on volume. This is before the heydays of Ferrari, Gucci, Georgio Armani and other Italian companies whose high-quality products would come to be known throughout the world.

Equal owners of the new company, the cousins are in the forefront of this new direction. In contrast to Rossi, they decide to produce high-quality pipes and to follow their uncle's advice about developing export outlets.

However, both principals are strong, opinionated, talented individuals. Friction develops until, by 1953, it is decided that Savinelli will be able to buy some of his pipes elsewhere and Buzzi will sell some of his pipes to retailers other than Savinelli. By 1956, Savinelli builds his own factory only a quarter of a mile from the Rossi factory in Barasso and all pipes produced by Buzzi go out under the name Pipe Brebbia.

A second trend the young company soon is fighting is not one of their choosing. At the time the new pipe company starts, pipes are the cheapest and most popular way of smoking in Italy; cigarettes are relatively expensive. However, the popularity of American cigarettes is established by the American occupational troops. Major progress in the automation of cigarette-making soon results in huge reductions in cigarette prices. The economic advantage of pipes is gone! Combined with the decision to produce high-quality pipes, the fledgling company has more than enough challenges.

"To succeed, Brebbia had to innovate," says Luciano Buzzi, son of Enea, and head of Pipe Brebbia today. "In the early days, my father created a cap for pipes that would keep out the rain, but let needed air in through strategically placed holes. We were also one of the first to move to acrylic mouthpieces—mouthpieces that always look good. We also developed a smoke dispersing device—a small insert for the mouthpiece. It breaks up the stream of smoke and spreads it more evenly throughout the mouth. Especially if you are a beginning pipe

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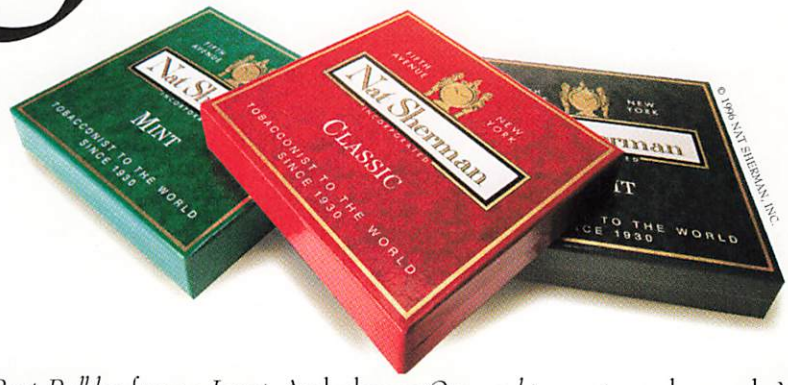

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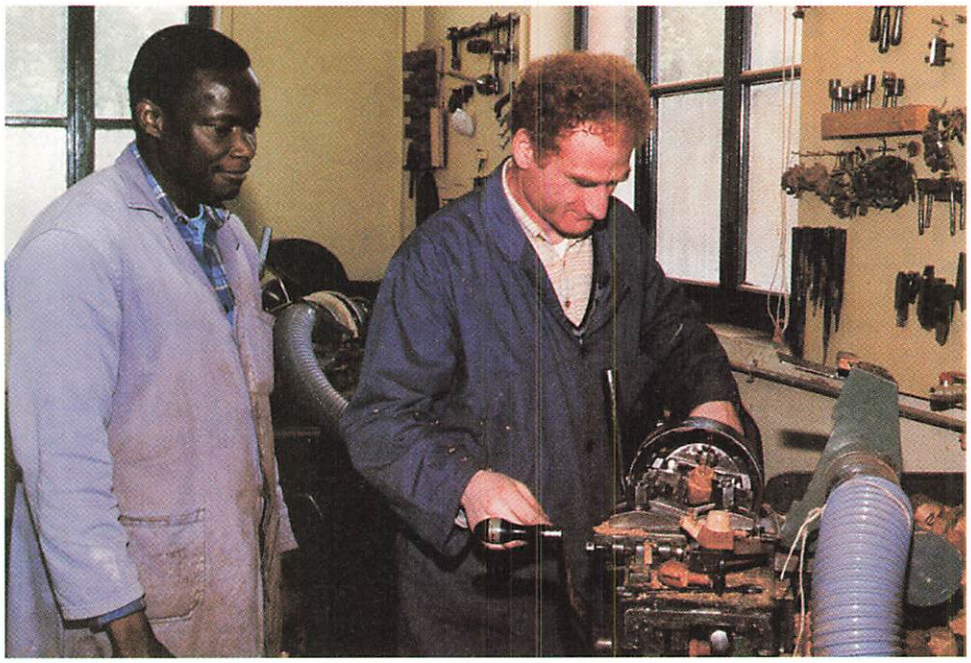


smoker, it can reduce tongue burn. The insert pops out for cleaning your pipe.

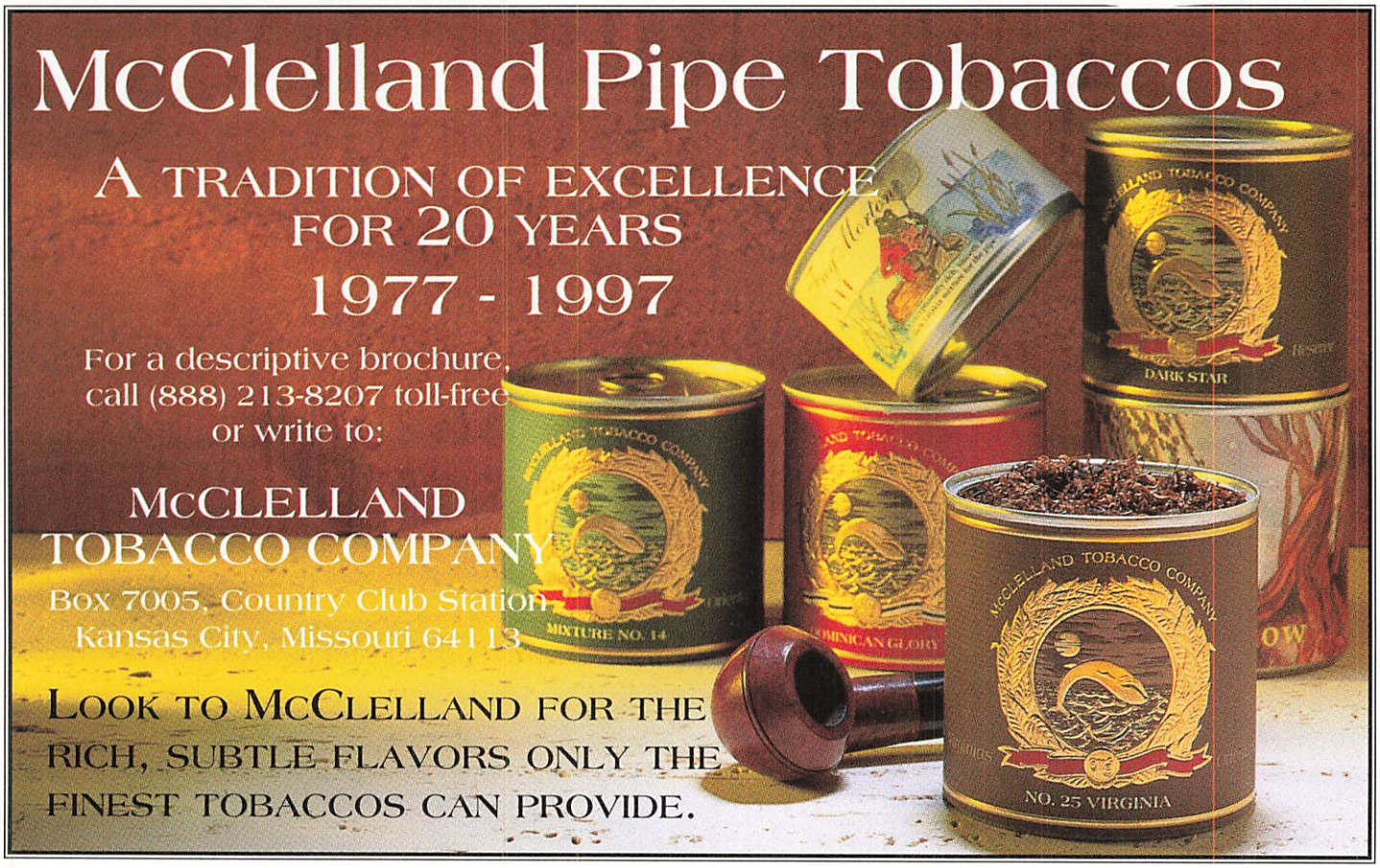
"The secret of Brebbia's successes is that we are a mix of classical, freehand and personal designs—selling a balance of finish, quality and form to fit individual tastes. In every pipe you can see the origin of the shape. As a result, all of our pipes look familiar, even if the shape is basically new.

"To foster this, we make all of our mouthpieces by hand, giving each a particular look. We also like to give our shanks a cylindrical shape; and we pay special attention to the point where the shank and bowl come together. We want to give the impression that the bowl grows organically out of the stem. People who are 'Brebbia fellows' can tell this look at any distance."

While Luciano talks about these innovations, his pen is seldom still. Soon drawings fill page after page—simple, direct, informative. The mini-mystery of the drawings is solved when he talks about joining the company 20 years ago.

It turns out that Luciano, a tall, soft-spoken, but typically emotional Italian, is a graduate architect. At one time, his goal in life was to design houses. He progressed to the point where he had designed some home interiors. Then, when he was 23, his father asked that he come to the factory and help with its reorganization. He started in shipping and warehousing and never turned back. "I fell in love with the creativity of producing beautiful pipes from briar. Now, the pipe is my life!" says Luciano.

His home is evidence that the architectural training is still with him. He designed a structure with an off-center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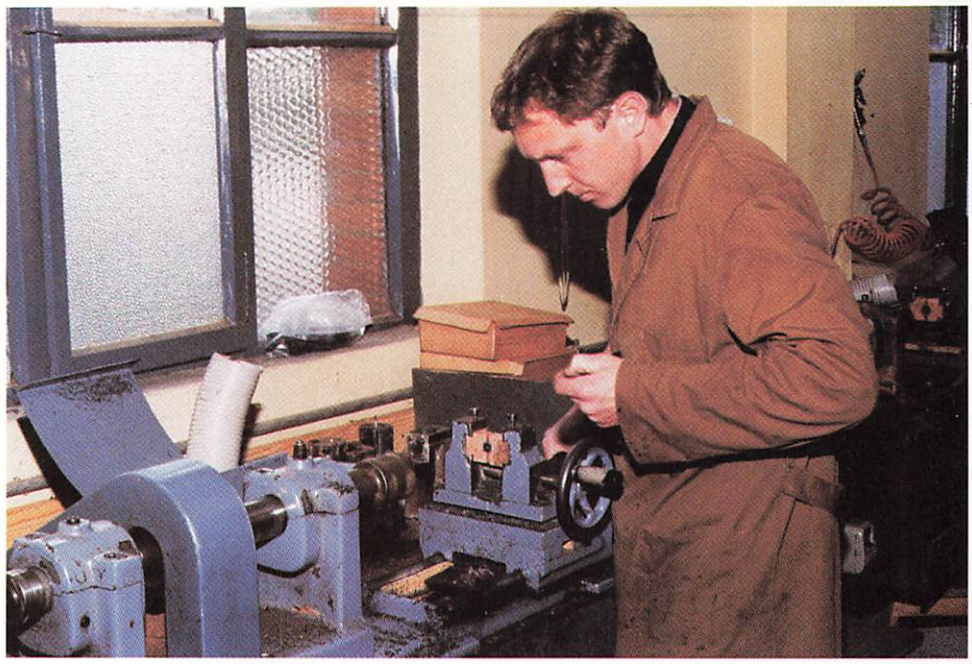
roof where beams soar upward in an interesting interplay of shapes. Glass barriers between the beams reveal this wooden beauty, while keeping air movement, including heating and cooling, under control.

In a nearby garage rest three other projects—his "girls"—two Harley-Davidson motorcycles he has modified himself, and an immaculate 1946 MG-TC—one of the original molded wood frame models—that he has restored himself. All rest under protective covering until they have their turn again in the sun.

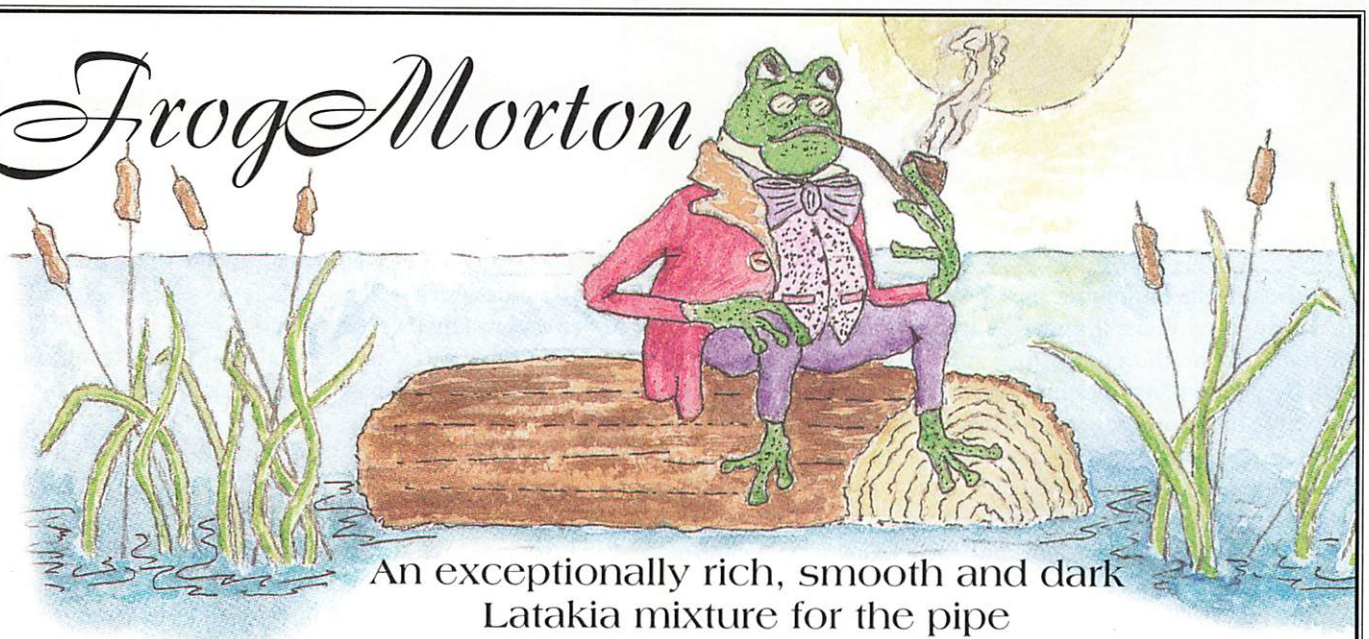
When Luciano joined Pipe Brebbia 20 years ago, there were 35 employees, down from 90 during the company's heyday. In the earlier days, with the far greater numbers, workers were specialized. Today, with 14 people making pipes, supported by three others, including Luciano, the workshop turns out 14,000 pipes a year from primarily Ligurian Italian briar. For the last 10 years, all pipes produced have been based on Luciano's architecturally-aided designs.

In the meantime, Enea Buzzi has been pioneering new directions on his own. They can all be traced back to his project to compete with Falcon pipes, beginning in 1964. To do this he had to learn to mold metal, especially aluminum. Then he mastered the really difficult technology of applying chrome to cast aluminum. ▶



On the left, Constantino adjusts a pipemaking machine that will be operated by Ousmane Camara, while Mario, above, fits mouthpieces to shanks. Both Constantino and Mario are veteran pipemakers who also specialize in freehand pipes.

FrogMorton



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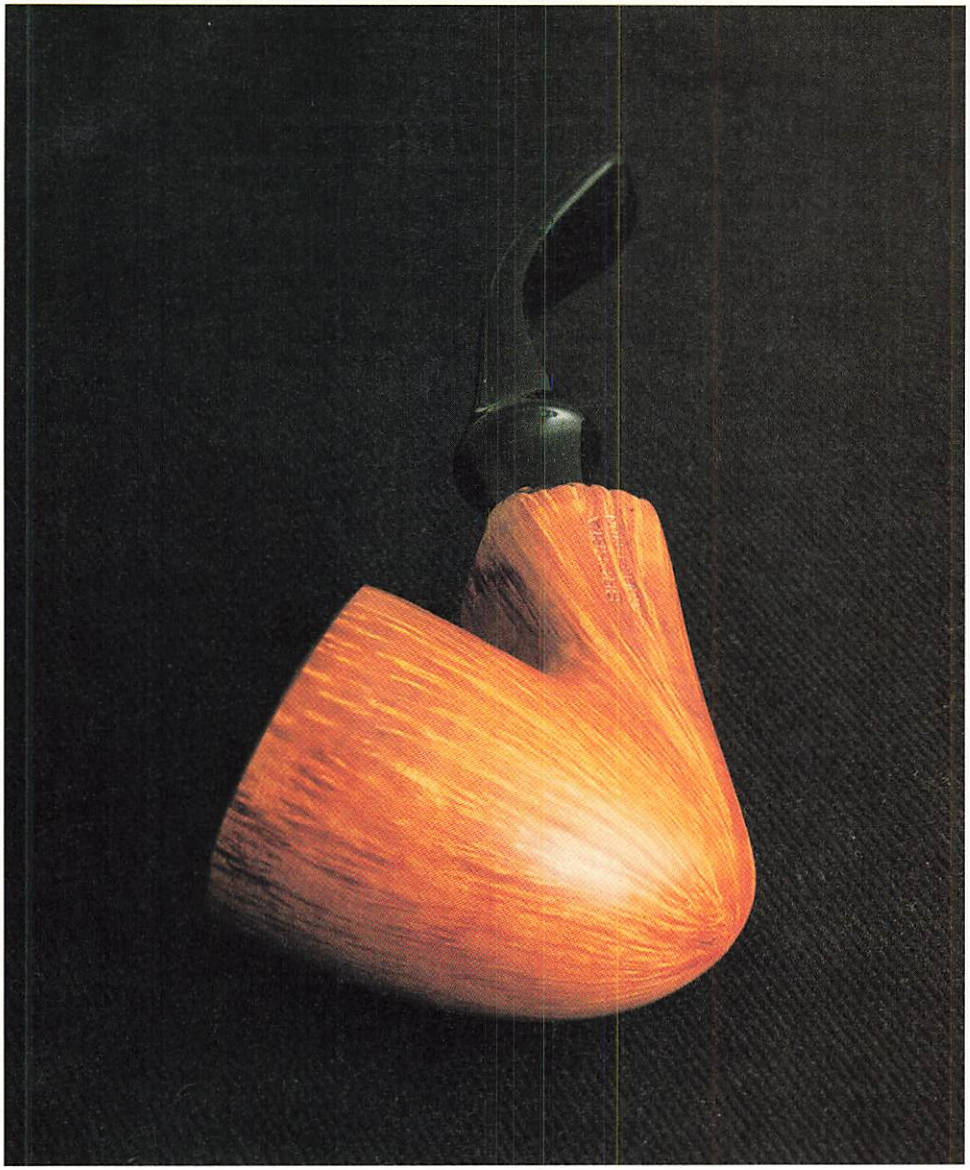

This outstanding Brebbia Collection pipe ranks four stars on a scale of one to four. The Collection line is freehand and only loosely based on classical shapes.

Although the aluminum pipe project lasted only seven years, it opened a whole new industry for the family, one greatly aided by a cheap, continuing source of electricity. Today, in the newer wing, 74-year-old Enea is involved full-time in casting 60,000 aluminum parts a day, primarily for motors and pumps to be used in appliances like dishwashers and refrigerators. "Instead of slowing down with age, if anything he works harder than ever," says Luciano of his father, shaking his head in mock disbelief.

In their large 6,000-pipe museum, Luciano shows how earlier Brebbia pipes leaned heavily toward caricatures, meeting the demands of the day, and gradually evolved into the more classical and freehand shapes preferred today.

Pipe Brebbia sells most of its pipes in Italy, followed by Germany specifically and Europe in general. Brebbia pipes were distributed in the United States through a variety of distributors from the mid-1970s until 1993, with the death of Barry Levin. Since then Luciano has been without a U.S. distributor and shipments to the U.S. have basically ceased. The good news is that negotiations are currently underway that may bring Brebbia pipes back to U.S. pipe smokers, perhaps by 1998.

"I buy about 25,000 pieces of briar a year," says Luciano. "Briar is like our bank. If things go better one year, I buy more briar; if they are worse, I buy less. In any case, I have enough briar stocked for five years...perhaps not for all dimensions, but for most. Briar must dry for at least a year before use. Longer is better.

"The first period of drying is especially important. We keep the briar in both high temperature and high humidity. This is to allow the briar to dry very slowly, from the inside outward. For this reason, old workshops with a good inventory of briar have the advantage in making quality briar pipes that smoke sweetly from the beginning. The only problem with this is the big investment necessary to carry briar for four or five years.

"When the head is turned, the briar is dried even longer. In addition, after we shape a pipe, we like to leave it for six months before finishing it. It colors better and is easier to handle and finish. In addition, the smoking pleasure is much better due to a sweeter taste right from the first bowl of tobacco.

"While I was reorganizing the workshop, people had to learn more than one skill. Now, most of our workers can do everything necessary. The average worker here today is around 40 years old. Two individuals do most of our freehand work and follow those pipes from beginning to end. They are Constantino, who has been with us for 15 years, and Mario, who has been here 10 years."

Pipes are made in one of two methods. For the lower class ebauchon briar from the center of the root, machines are used to form the basic shape of the pipe, using models created for the purpose. With this approach, little attention is paid to grain, but straight-grain pipes are identified and upgraded before sanding and finishing.

All pipes made from plateaux briar—from the outside of the root—are approached in an entirely different way, to take full advantage of their superior grain. These much more expensive blocks are all worked individually, with great attention to detail. Usually the whole pipe, from beginning to end, is made by the same person.

"We have to make the pipe following the grain," says Luciano. "This means the bowl on the pipe will change continuously until the surface is clean of flaws. This approach doubles the number of straight-grain pipes produced.

"With this approach, finishing—sandpapering, coloring, polishing, etc.—takes about 90 percent of the total labor. This is extremely important because it gives the final look of the pipe. Especially the sandpapering because, as a pipe is worked this way, the form can be modified to eliminate flaws."

Of the 14,000 pipes produced each year, only about 1,000 are straight grains. ▶

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NOMENCLATURE

Pipes are stamped with: Brebbia; pura when appropriate, with guarantee; shape; series; finish or color; and fiammata when appropriate.

FIAMMATA—Straight grain.

SABBIATA—Sandblast; also semi-sabbiata for partially sandblasted.

ROCCIATA—Rusticated.

PURA—No fills.

LISCIA—Smooth.

Listed below are the top lines, which would normally be exported to the U.S. They include:

LINEA A—Pipes of generally classical design, all without fills. The top three grades, A, AA and AAA are all classified as straight grain and are available in natural color. Also in this line is LP in smooth plum or mahogany-color; SA, in a sandblasted mahogany color; and Cellini, a smooth, ruby-colored pipe. Suggested retail prices vary from $420 for a AAA straight grain to $104 for a Cellini.

JUBILEE—This line featured a different shape every year from 1992 through 1997, leading up to Brebbia's 50th anniversary Jubilee celebration in June of this year. Although the colors varied slightly over the years, the various classifications include: Smooth "pura" in walnut, mahogany and natural color; sandblast in black or mahogany; and three levels of straight-grain natural pipes, indicated by one through three stars. Suggested retail prices vary from $620 for a three-star straight-grain natural to $126 for a black sandblast.

COLLECTION—More freehand latitude is taken with this line. Models include: Straight grain "pura"; half sandblasted; and four levels of straight grain "pura" with boxwood rings. Suggested retail prices vary from $525 for a four-star straight grain to $60 for half-sandblasted. Because they are free-hand, classic shapes are used only for ideas.

SERIES 186—This line consists of six shapes and is available in Liscia (smooth) and a mahogany sandblast with a band. Suggested retail prices range from $160 for the smooth to $50 for the sandblast. They are made so they can be used with or without a 9 mm filter.

SERIES 187—This line is available in three finishes—a smooth dark brown finish, amber and a light, natural finish called President. Available in six shapes, each pipe has a contrasting briar extension above a black ring. Suggested retail prices run from $160 for the President to $80 for the smooth brown. These pipes can be used with or without a 9 mm filter.

CLASSICA BREBBIA—Popular in the U.S. in earlier times, this line includes 24 shapes and three finishes—smooth natural "pura," smooth amber color, and smooth walnut. Suggested retail prices vary from $176 for the natural to $84 for the smooth walnut.

SHAPE IDENTIFICATION: Usually consists of three- or four-digit numbers.

But, Luciano explains, the grain has little to do with the smoking capacity of the pipe.

"Straight grain is something that has to do more with aesthetic pleasure—having something unique—than it does with the pleasure of smoking the pipe. The only physical advantage of a straight-grain pipe is that the grains running from the bottom of the pipe to the top conduct heat up and out of the pipe, making the pipe feel cooler to your hand."

Four thousand of the 14,000 pipes produced are in the line called Linea A. Designed by Luciano, the line is inspired by classical shapes, but may vary from those shapes because of the process of making them by hand. Each mouthpiece is made from acrylic slab and has a briar insert. About 400 of these are straight grain.

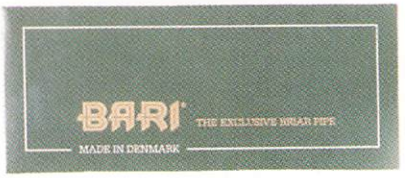
The Collection line is more freehand than Linea A and, therefore, less classical. About 500 Collection pipes are made each year, depending on demand. Of these, only 30 to 40 AAA straight-grain pipes (Brebbia's highest rating) are produced each year.

Finishes are made with natural products and are traditional in nature "because we don't like to cover the quality of the wood. For a light finish, we use extra polish."

"A pipe in my opinion is a particular way of smoking," says Luciano. "It is both the pleasure of holding smoke in your mouth and the pleasure of holding a caressable object in your hands. There was a time when a pipe was primarily for viewing and another time when it was mainly for smoking. Today is a time when a pipe should not only be smokable and pleasant to the touch, but also an object to be displayed with pride. For this reason, I foresee an increase in the future in the quality of both pipes and pipe tobaccos.

"I think it will be hard for people who smoke cigarettes to go directly to pipe smoking. However, the move from cigars to pipes will be much easier."

With the change of each generation, new ideas are created to meet changing markets and more technical problems are overcome. And water continues to flow through the turbines in the electrical generating plant on the first floor. Sometime it seems the more things change, the more they are the same. *P&T*



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brebbia jubilee

Pipe Brebbia started promoting its 50th anniversary Jubilee in 1992 when it came out with the first in its annual Jubilee pipe series.

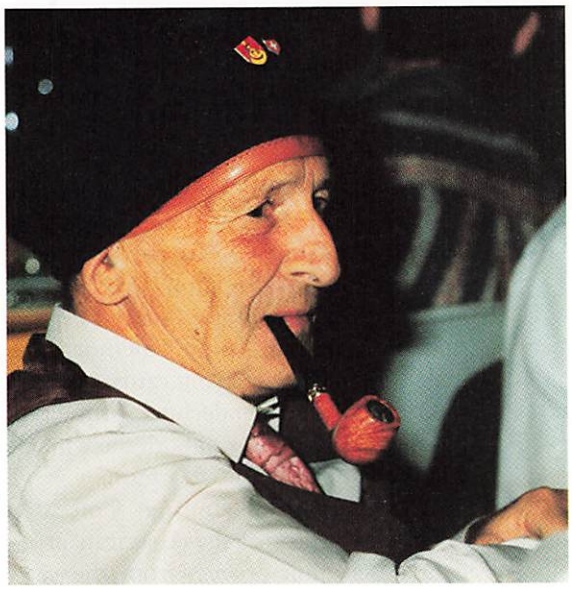
When the two-day event took place June 28-29 of this year, hundreds of pipe lovers from many countries braved the torrential rainfall to attend. Between 400 and 500 showed up for the Saturday night gala dinner; 700 were there for lunch the next day; approximately 1,400 were registered for the two-day pipe festival. In spite of the severe weather, the proceedings were well protected in a large tent, complete with pipe outlines on the roof.

This appears to be the first Jubilee and pipe show ever sponsored in Europe by a pipe manufacturer.

Enea Buzzi, one of the original founders of Pipe Brebbia, and Luciano, his son and manager of Pipe Brebbia, lower left, opened their elaborate 6,000-pipe museum for the duration of the Jubilee. Pipe-smoking trophies fill the tops of the display cases. Many can be traced to teams of which Franca Ferretti was a member. Ferretti, who still works in the Brebbia factory making pipes, set a woman's record that still stands at the May 1969 European Championships of 2 hours, 41 minutes and 46 seconds.

The Saturday evening gala dinner was followed by recognition of individuals, including a special award presented to Alberto Paronelli by Roger Almerge, president of Pipe Club of France and publisher of Reveu des Tabacs. Paronelli is a noted Italian pipe collector. His beautiful collection and many historical pipe-related items are in his private museum, located in Gavarati.

Individuals registered for the various events received two pipes, one for each day. One was the Jubilee Pipe, the other



the Gala Anniversary Pipe. A representative of the Pipe Club of Bargen is shown on the left smoking his Gala Anniversary pipe.

These pipes were used by many in the long-smoking contests, lower right. Winners in the various categories were: Pipe Jubilee, D. Masnaghetti; Pipe D'Epoca, A. Avveduto; Pipe Gala Anniversary, A. Pisanelli; Hookas, P. Crenna and S. Zorsetto; Brebbia Friends, Elisabeth Dobnig, of Austria, with her husband, Werner Dobnig, in second place. Mrs. Dobnig was also the first place woman overall. *P&T*

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Presidential Pipes

Whether smoked or used as promotions, pipes played an important role in many presidents' lives

by Larry O'Connor

Pipe lovers and other visitors to the We The People exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C., can get an eyeful of two centuries worth of colorful political campaign memorabilia, including buttons, playing cards, watches, medallions and a wonderful assortment of pipes in the likenesses of both the winners and losers of presidential contests.

The museum's Campaign Collection traces the history of the American presidential selection process from the early period after American Independence, when the choosing of presidents was a relatively staid affair, through the raucous political electioneering of the latter half of the 18th century, to the mass media campaigns of the modern era.

The museum's campaign souvenirs include everything from a Woodrow Wilson nutcracker and a whistle resembling Teddy Roosevelt's teeth to belt buckles promoting Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter. A star-spangled Spiro Agnew—Richard Nixon's first vice president—is immortalized on a wrist watch, and John Kennedy's likeness appears on a liquor bottle corker. A

This finely carved likeness of Woodrow Wilson is catalogued as being made of clay or chalk, but is more likely meerschaum.

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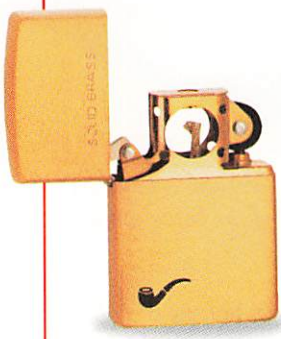
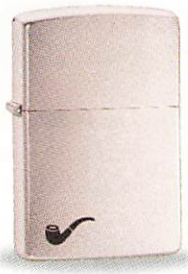


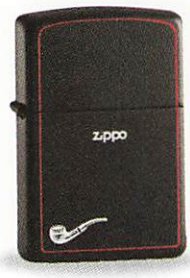
Brush Brass



Brush Chrome

Black Matte

Scrimshaw Ship



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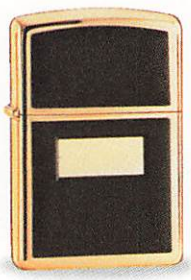

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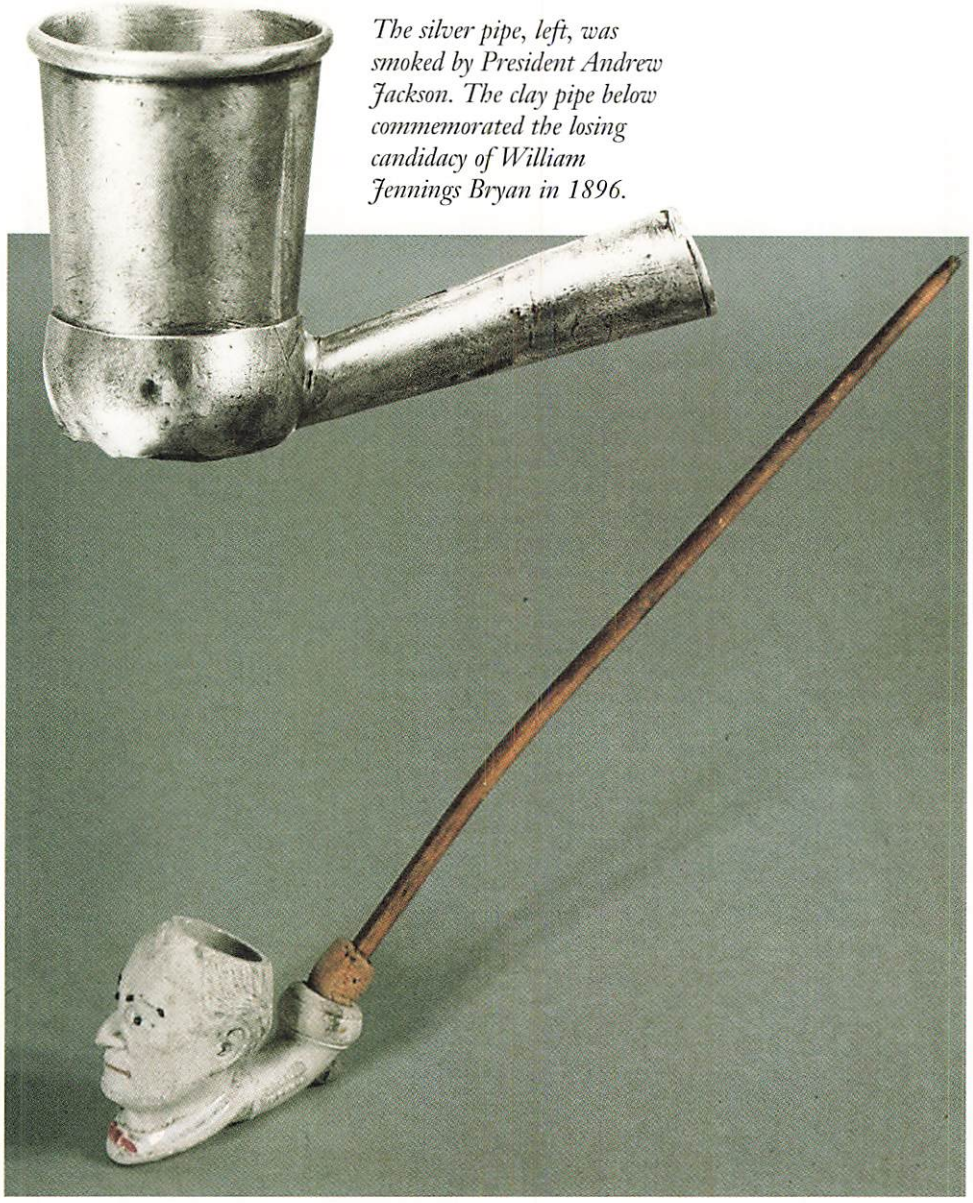
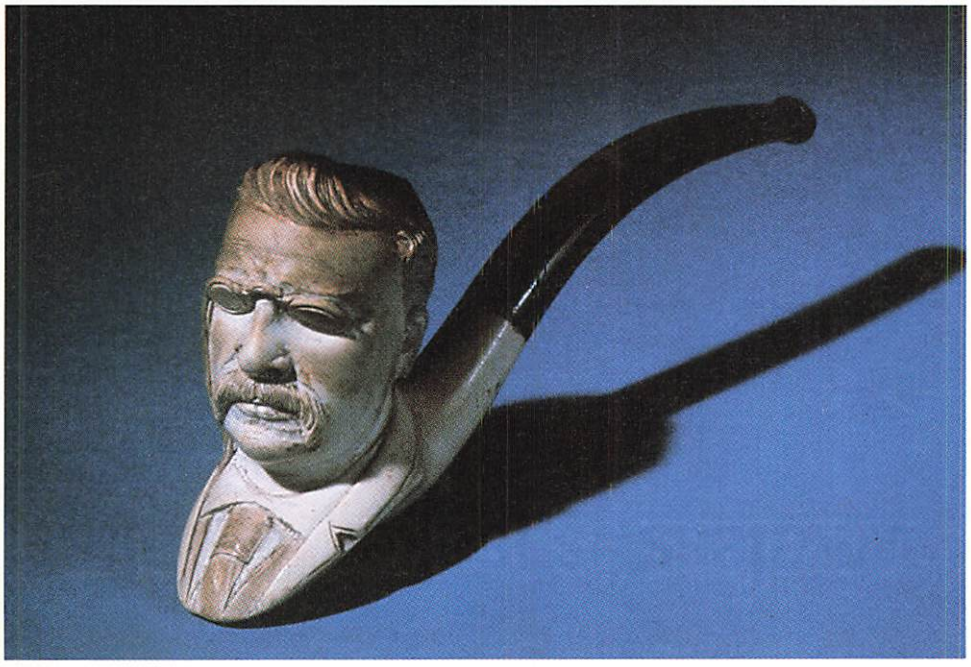
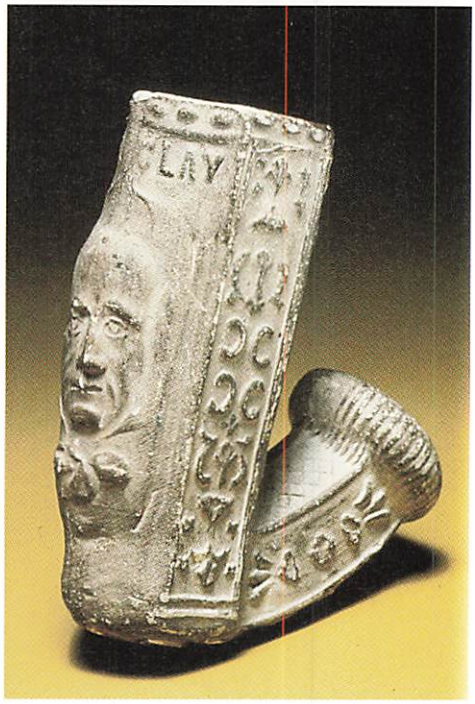


The silver pipe, left, was smoked by President Andrew Jackson. The clay pipe below commemorated the losing candidacy of William Jennings Bryan in 1896.



This meerschaum commemorated Theodore Roosevelt's second election in 1904.



The Henry Clay pipe, above, has a six-sided bowl with a relief of the losing candidate on the front side.

burgundy bow tie boosts the 1956 campaign of Adlai Stevenson and Estes Kefauver against Eisenhower and Nixon. (It didn't help much.) And an ironic button put out by the Lyndon Johnson team shows an atomic mushroom cloud with the slogan "Go with Goldwater."

And while Bob Dole found himself in trouble with the PC police for questioning whether nicotine is uniformly and universally addictive, political candidates at one time used tobacco and tobacco products widely in their electioneering efforts. The bands on cigars handed out by Calvin Coolidge's campaign, for example, were adorned with that candidate's picture. And Eisenhower's handlers tried to sway voters with packs of "I Like Ike" non-filtered cigarettes, with the toothy candidate's smiling face on a red-and-white striped background.

But pipes were clearly the tobacco implement of choice for electioneers. For nearly a century—from the 1840s on—presidential candidates were the subject of effigy pipes in a variety of materials, including clay, briar and meerschaum of various shapes and sizes.

Campaign managers sometimes commissioned pipemakers to manufacture pipes in the likeness of their candidates and then passed them out as souvenirs to help spur voter interest and support, says Harry Rubenstein of the museum's Divi-

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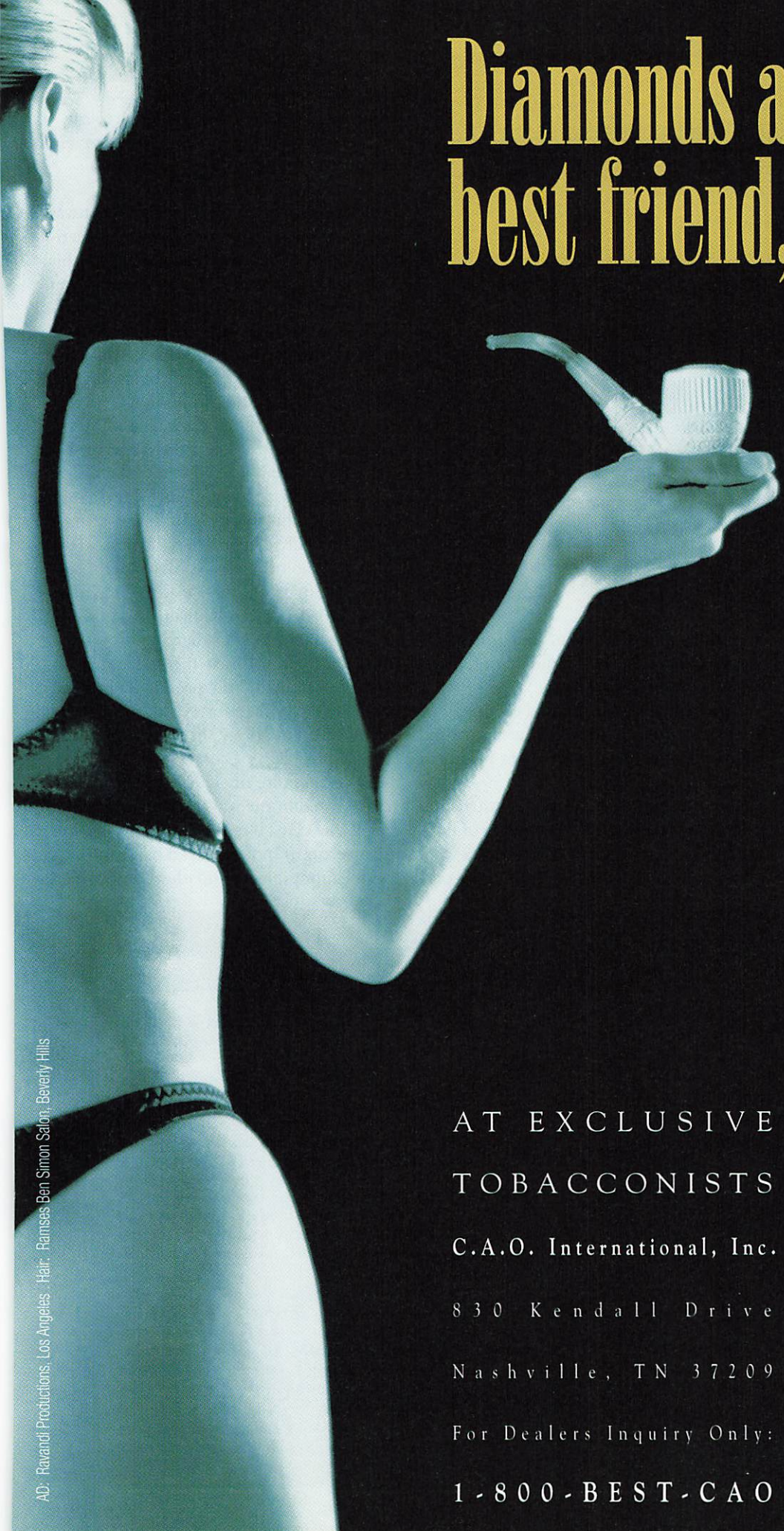

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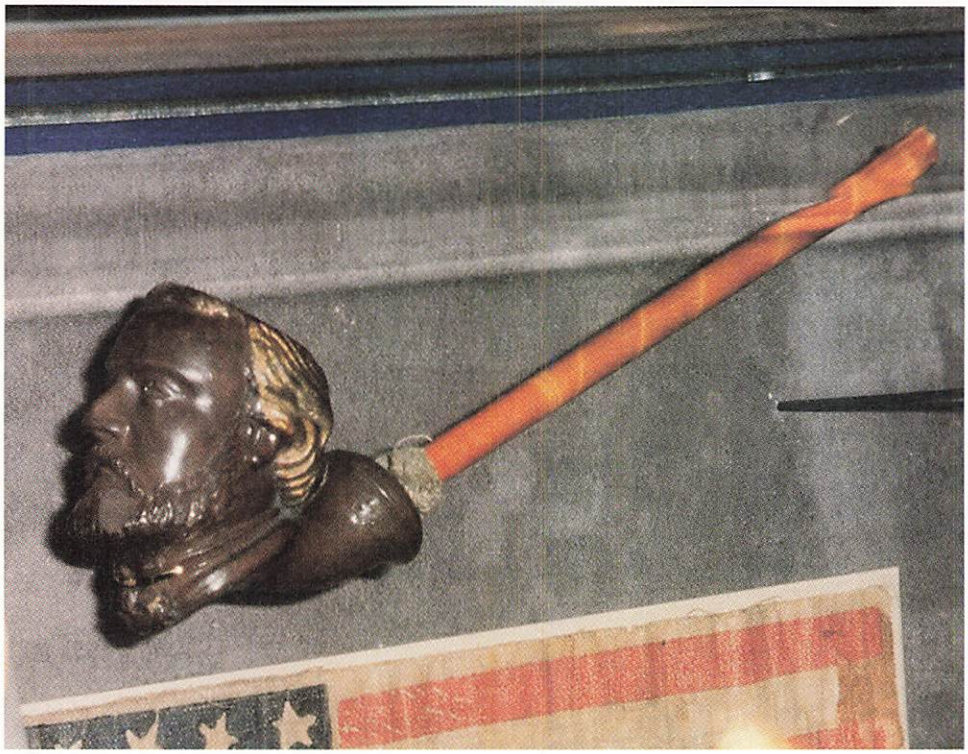


While the painted ceramic pipe, left, promoted the candidacy of Ulysses S. Grant, he actually smoked the meerschaum shown below. He primarily smoked pipes before his fame provided a supply of free cigars.

sion of Political History. And pipemakers often made candidate effigy pipes on their own, sometimes in sets featuring opposing candidates, to cash in on the excitement of political campaigns, Rubenstein says.

One of the oldest and most striking pipes is a clay Clay—a clay pipe promoting the candidacy of Henry Clay, the Missouri Compromise advocate who ran unsuccessfully against James K. Polk in 1844. The pipe features a 2 5/8-inch high, six-sided bowl—the front panel of which sports the face of the candidate in relief—and a 9-inch wooden stem.

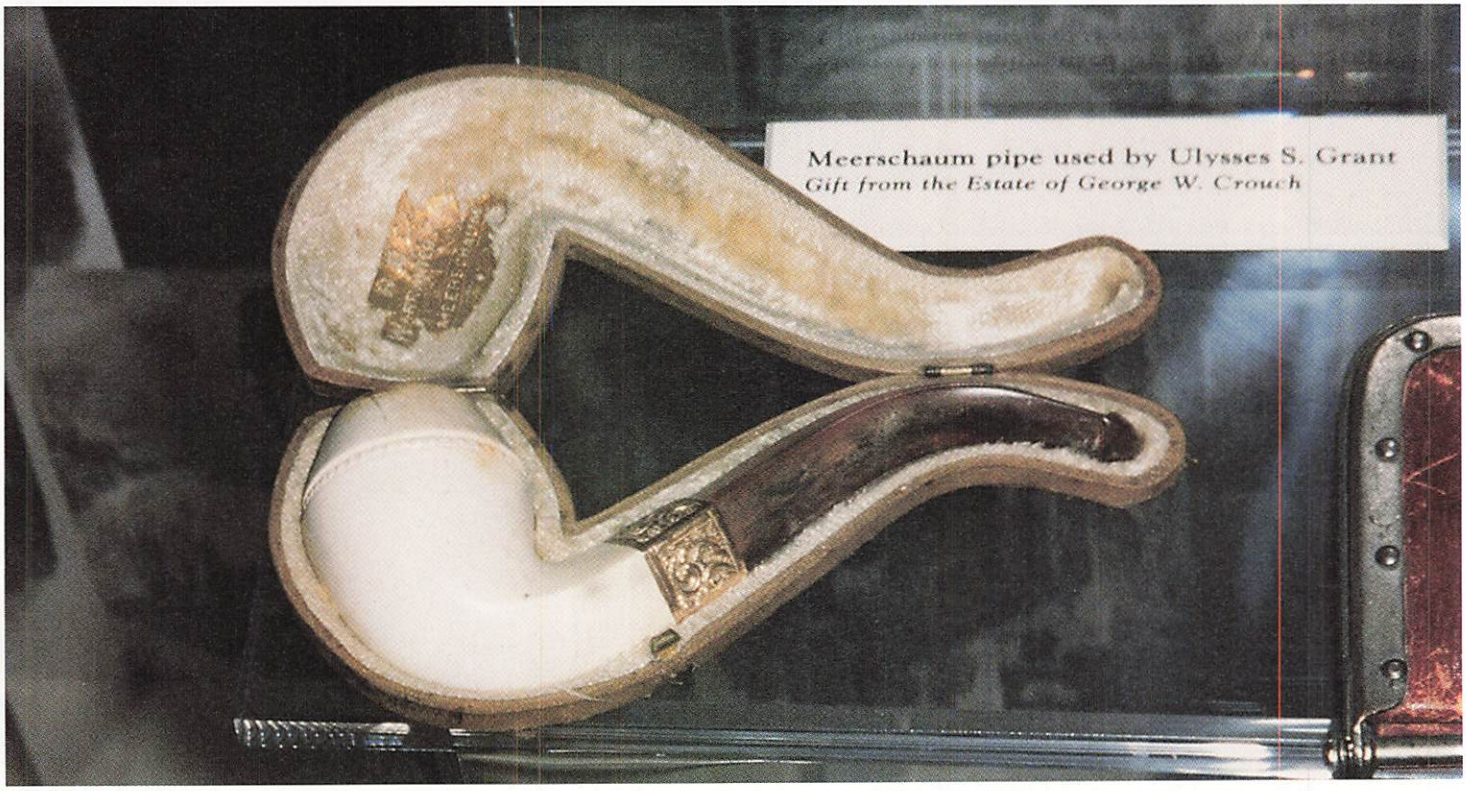
A brown and gold painted ceramic pipe with a bamboo stem shows a proud Ulysses S. Grant, who served as president from 1869 to 1877.

Another pipe of solid clay construction commemorates the 1888 candidacy of Benjamin Harrison, who was elected after what some political scientists call the most corrupt campaign in American history. (It was also one of the quirkiest: although Harrison was elected by the electoral college, his opponent Grover Cleveland actually won the popular vote.) The bowl of the 5 1/2-inch long clay pipe depicts Harrison on one side and an eagle on the other, while the stem is emblazoned with one of his slogans, "Protection For American Labor."

William Jennings Bryan was never elected to the presidency—but not for a lack of trying. A clay, cork and wood pipe with 10-inch stem and 2-inch bowl commemorates his losing candidacy against William McKinley in 1896. If you like the idea of income taxes or of women's suffrage, then Bryan, who lost to McKinley again in 1900 and to William Taft in 1908, would have been your man.

A spiffy, 6 3/4-inch meerschaum with an amber stem and the proud, determined and lifelike visage of Teddy Roosevelt seems to shout "Bully" in commemoration of that president's second election in 1904.

An even more finely detailed pipe from 1920 (listed in the museum catalogue as a chalk or clay, but more likely another meerschaum) sports a metal band and vulcanite mouthpiece, and the bespectacled



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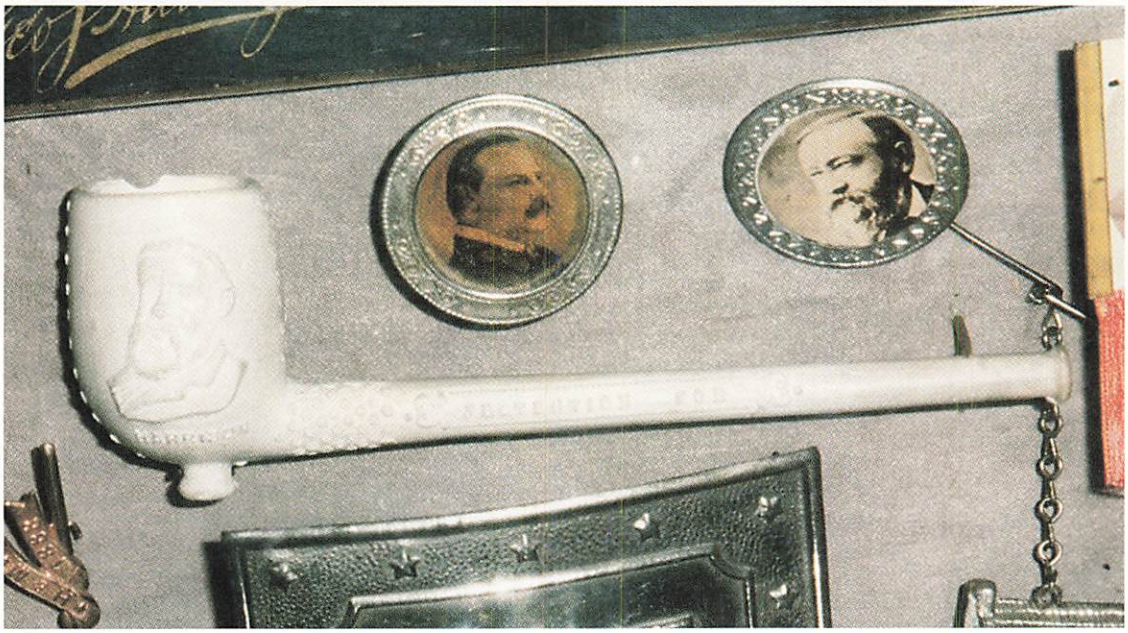


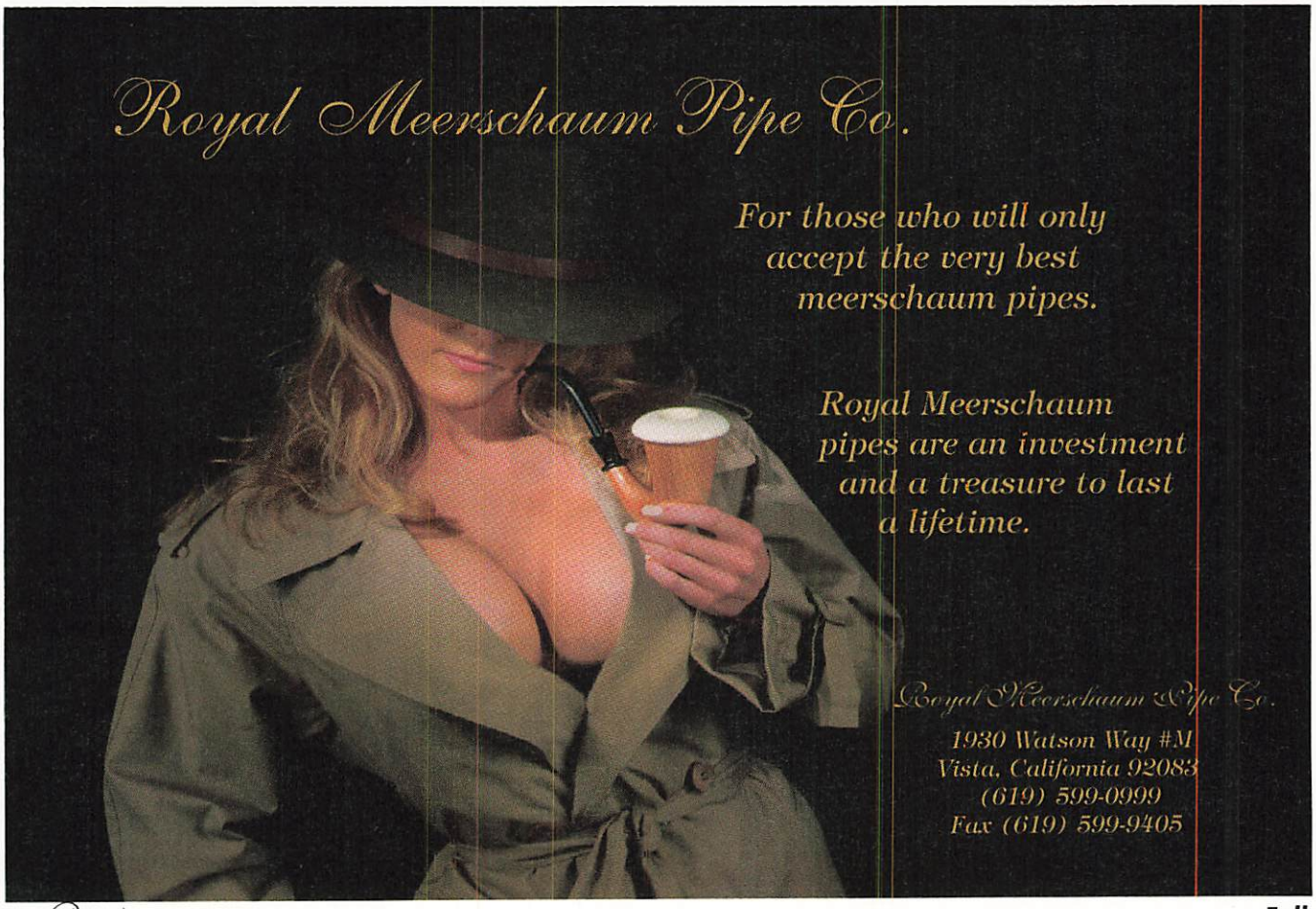
This pipe commemorated the candidacy of Benjamin Harrison, elected in 1888 after what some call the most corrupt campaign in U.S. history.

head of Woodrow Wilson.

Many of the museum's pipes and other bits of campaign memorabilia came as a donation from a single collector—Ralph Becker. Becker, a long-time Washington, D.C. attorney and one of the founders of the Young Republican movement in the 1920s, began by collecting banners, buttons, posters, bunting and the like at Young Republican conventions. He soon broadened the scope of his collection, looking high and low for almost 50 years for political souvenirs from presidential campaigns of all parties, as he writes in the prologue to the Smithsonian book "Hail to the Candidate."

The campaign pipes of the We The People exhibit are not the museum's only presidential pipes on display. Among the museum's other holdings is a petite, 1 3/4-inch silver pipe bowl smoked by Andrew Jackson, who served from 1829 to 1837.

And visitors who thought General and President Ulysses S. Grant smoked only cigars will learn differently. Housed in the museum's Ceremonial Court is a beautiful uncarved meerschaum with a gold band and amber mouthpiece in its original case—right alongside Grant's leather cigar case. ***P&T***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Your pipes should have an easy draw

by Richard S. Newcombe

Right in the middle of a very busy day at work I received a phone call from a reporter at Bloomberg News Service. He said he was writing a story, such as those that appeared recently in *USA Today*, *The Wall Street Journal* and the *Chicago Tribune*, about the sudden resurgence of pipe smoking. The reporter asked if I thought that yuppies were jumping on a pipe-smoking bandwagon.

"Not likely," I said. "Pipes are very different from other types of smoking. You can't collect cigarettes or cigars, but you can, and thousands of us do, collect pipes. I would say that cigarettes are like television, cigars are like the movies and pipes are like reading a book. They require knowledge."

In fact, I would say that every pipe collector and pipe smoker has his own philosophy of pipes, whether he knows it or not. There are certain ideas and assumptions that he has formed that constitute his core belief system when it comes to pipes. What is so strange is how different we all are. I say this because I find myself at odds with the prevailing beliefs held as sacred by most pipe smokers.

Perhaps the most dramatic difference is my conviction that 999 out of every thousand pipes need to be modified slightly to be enjoyed fully. Their smoke holes through the shank are too narrow for my taste. Whenever I buy a pipe, new or used, I open it up before I do anything else.

Let me get technical just for a second: The air hole on most shanks is between 3.5 and 4 millimeters, but I prefer 4.1 millimeters on most pipes, and 4.3 millimeters on large pipes. The same applies to having an open mouthpiece. I almost always drill a bigger air hole through the tenon, and then I use a file to widen the slot through the lip end to open up the mouthpiece. I don't consider the pipe smokable until I can slide an extra fluffy pipe cleaner through the tenon and have it come out the other end, where the lip is, with very little resistance.

If you don't believe me, try it. When you have a pipe drilled as I just described, you'll be amazed at how easily it smokes and how easy it is to keep lit. There is no better feeling than being able to enjoy a pipe, put it down for a full minute or two, and then pick it back up and puff gently as the tobacco is still smoldering. I believe this is what Alfred Dunhill meant when he called it "the gentle art of smoking." I rarely have to use more than two matches to keep a pipe lit for 45 minutes or an hour or an hour and a half, depending on the size of the bowl, and I do this without even trying. When the air hole is opened properly, your pipe will stay lit.

I once asked Jess Chonowitsch and Lars Ivarsson, two of the world's best pipemakers, why they don't open all their pipes the way that I like them. I pointed out that when I bought a pipe from Lars that he had made for his own smoking enjoyment, it was wide open. If it's good enough for you—why don't you make it that way for your customers? Jess replied that if he used a file or a drill to open up the lip area, he would have to remove vulcanite from inside the mouthpiece. This makes the material, from top to bottom, extremely thin and easy to bite through. He said it is no problem for me because I almost never keep a pipe clenched between my teeth. He also said that experienced pipe smokers, such as himself and Lars, know precisely how much pressure they can apply when holding a pipe between their teeth. That is why they have no problem opening the lip area of their own pipes. But Jess said that if they opened the lip area for all the pipes they made for sale, it would lead to problems. "Too many unsuspecting smokers would

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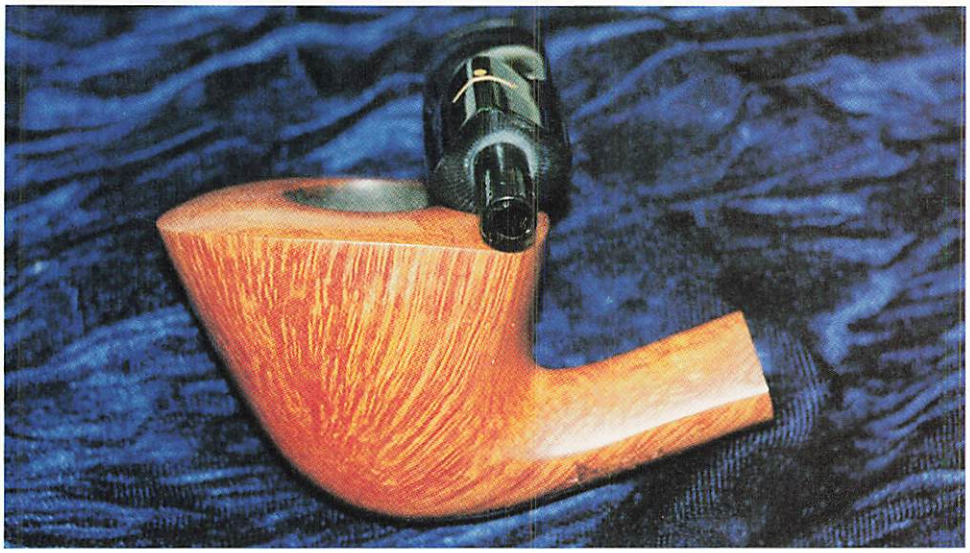

The smoke channel in this Pipa Croci was opened by Newcombe to his standards for optimum smoking. Note the oval smoke hole in the lip—a circular 4.1 millimeter hole would cut through the thin mouthpiece. The pipe was test-smoked here at P&T *and consistently remained lit and smokable after being set down for 4 to 6 minutes.*

chomp down on the end and bite through the mouthpiece," he said, "and then they'd tell their local tobacconist, 'This pipe's no good!'"

Lars said that the pipe I had bought from him has a military push-pull bit with a metal tenon, just like the metal sleeves inside bamboo shanks, and metal stays open. This is in contrast to briar, which has the effect of closing a little with each smoke because the tars and oils accumulate inside the wood in the shank. So a metal sleeve at 4 millimeters probably has the same opening as one between 4.1 and 4.3 millimeters of wood.

Jess said that the size of the air hole was the single biggest source of controversy between two of the greatest pipemakers of the 20th century: Paul Rasmussen and Sixten Ivarsson. Paul favored 3.5 millimeters, and Sixten was considered revolutionary because he expanded the air hole to 4 millimeters.

But Sixten was not alone in this. Some of the best pipemakers from the 1920s, '30s, '40s and '50s, usually in England—Dunhill, Charatan, Barling, Comoy and Sasieni—drilled their air holes much wider than is commonly found today. I believe this is one of the reasons there is such a strong demand for these older pipes. They smoke like a dream. Of course, each pipemaker was different, and not all old pipes were drilled properly, by any means.

Another issue that is related to having an easy draft involves the bend of the mouthpiece. It was only after seeing about a thousand examples that it finally occurred to me that the bend on Jess' full-bent pipes was less round—much less bent—than the bend on Petersons or Italian pipes or almost any other pipes. I asked Jess if he avoids bending them so sharply to ensure that the smoke hole stays open and the draw is smooth and easy. "Absolutely," he said. "That's an important difference between my pipes and the factory pipes like you find at Dunhill or Stanwell or the others."

If you're still skeptical about what I'm advocating, ask Nikos Levin. About six months ago I gave Nikos dozens of my pipes to sell. He told me that he kept one to smoke himself—a black, sandblasted prince with the name "Dorsett Knotty" stamped on it. I had opened that pipe to just the way I like it.

Nikos called me one day, not knowing that I had opened it, and asked where he could find more Dorsett Knotty pipes. "It's the best smoker I've ever had," he said. "I went to the post office this morning and was smoking the pipe in my car. I left the pipe, still burning, in the car's ashtray when I went into the post office. I came out three or four minutes later and, incredibly, I could still puff on it and it was still smoldering. I was going to sell it for $20 or $30, but no way; I'm keeping it. It's become my favorite smoker!" I explained that it was the opening that made the pipe so good. Nikos then sent me six of his pipes, and I opened them all for him, and he has become a convert.

I sold Ed Lehman an ODA Dunhill bruyere full bent. Ed generally stays away from bent pipes, but he noticed that the bend on this one was more like a Jess pipe than a Dunhill. I had straightened it out just slightly. I try to tell anyone I sell a pipe to when I have opened it up for an easier draw, but I forgot to tell Ed.

He called me one day to tell me about the pipe. "I can't believe how well it smokes. I can put it down for minutes at a time, then pick it up and puff, then put it back down. It hardly ever goes out!"

Since then, I have stamped my initials, "R.S.N.," on all my pipes that have been opened up either by me or by Jim Benjamin or Jess Chonowitsch. I do this so that if you buy a pipe from my collection, you will know that it has been opened.

I wish I could take credit for having made this discovery on my own, but it was really two pipe experts—my two gurus—who showed me the way: Jim Benjamin and Jess Chonowitsch. Jess' contribution was in figuring out the dimensions of 4.1 to 4.3 millimeters in the shank. Jim's contribution came in the initial discovery.

I had bought a 4-dot Sasieni from Tom Colwell that has a silver stamp that says "YS24." Tom thought it was a graduation pipe from "Yale, Summer of 1924." Obviously, it was a very old pipe. And it smoked like no other. I had sent it to Jim Benjamin to be cleaned up. He made it look like brand new, which is how he always makes old pipes look.

I couldn't believe how well it smoked, and I called Jim to ask why. "It's all in the air hole," he said. "That pipe was made by Joseph Sasieni, and he knew how to make pipes. He had an opening for a smooth draft." I asked Jim if he had ever opened any of his own pipes, and he replied, "Yes—nearly all of the newer ones. Most of the older ones were opened just fine." That's what got me started, and now I've become a firm believer that all pipes should be opened as I have described. ▶

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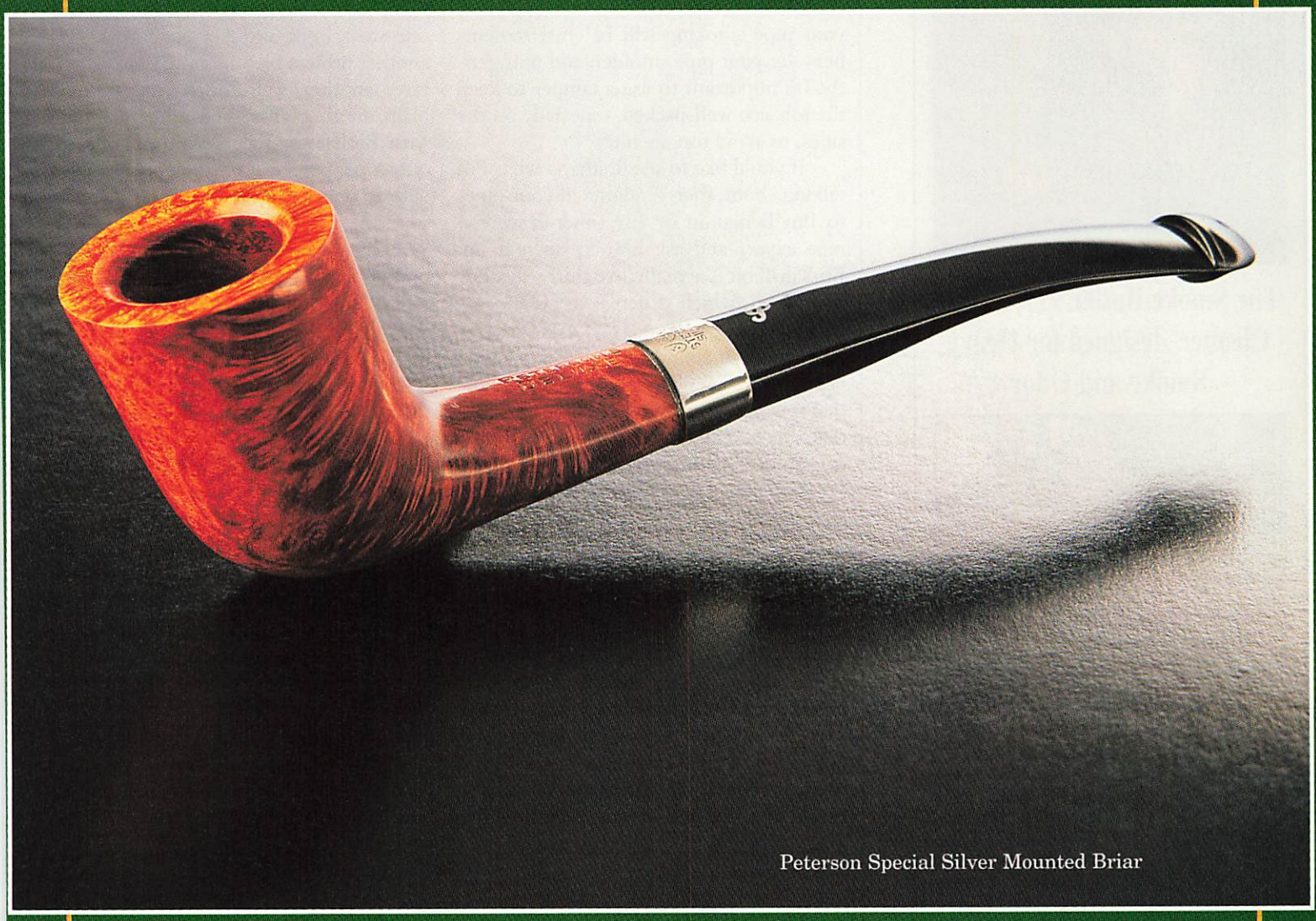

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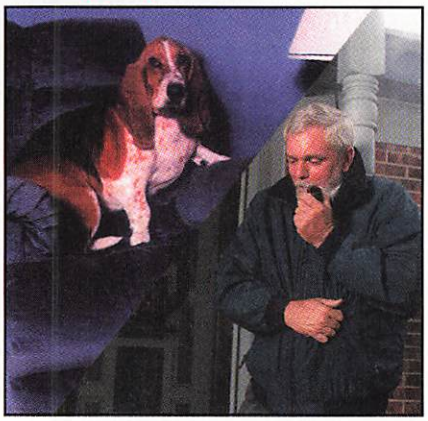

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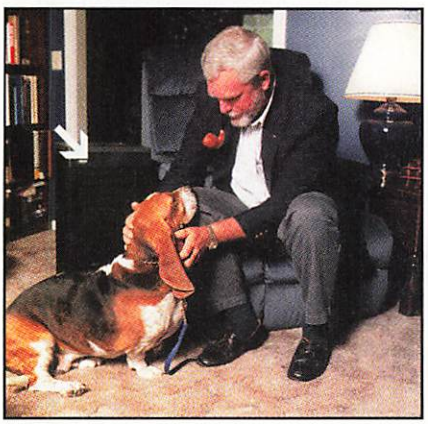

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I asked Jim if having such an easy draw could cause tongue bite. "No," he said. "It's just the opposite. You get tongue bite from tugging and tugging on a pipe with a narrow smoke hole. Picture trying to suck molasses through a straw! The best way to enjoy a pipe is to take a puff or two and then put it down for 30 or 60 seconds, then take another puff or two—you can't believe how relaxing and enjoyable your pipe smoking will be! Just remember—let your pipe smolder, and puff gently. It's important to use a tamper to keep the tobacco well-packed, especially on the sides, to avoid tongue bite."

If you'd like to see firsthand what I'm talking about, then send one of your pipes to Jim Benjamin or any other respected pipe expert and ask him to open it up. Jim's drill bit is actually five thirty-seconds of an inch, which is between 4.0 and 4.1 millimeters.

I know it sounds heretical to change nearly every pipe I own, but I also know that it works for me. What is interesting is that this is only one of the basic assumptions I have made a part of my philosophy of pipes. There are dozens of others—and each one is equally controversial.

The main point is to experiment to find what works best for you. Remember, pipe smoking is like reading a book. It requires effort and knowledge, and its rewards are enormous. I do not claim to be an expert. There are collectors who have forgotten more about pipes than I have learned. I am not saying that the open air hole is a carved-in-stone, right-or-wrong principle for everyone. I just know that, for me, it has enhanced my enjoyment of pipes immeasurably. I am hoping that by writing this article I can persuade some of the better pipemakers to experiment a little and open up their drafts. In the end, though, it's all a matter of personal taste.

It's a lot like eating. Some people prefer steak, others like chicken, or fish, or a vegetable plate. And within each subset there are dozens of varieties. For example, one steak lover wants a New York strip, another prefers filet mignon. One wants it rare, another well-done. One wants it plain, another with A-1 sauce and another with Bearnaise sauce. With salt or without. A pepper steak or no pepper. Topped with an onion ring or plain. And so on and so forth.

One of the things I like most about pipes is that I keep learning. I know more today than I did last year, and I knew more then than I did the year before. I find that exciting, anticipating that 10 or 20 years from now I'll know way more about pipes than I do today. We keep learning, and that always gives us something to look forward to. Can you imagine saying the same about cigarettes or cigars? Never.

Pipes are magical in their own way, and nothing is so fantastic as to learn how to maximize your enjoyment of them. This learning process is really an adventure that lasts a lifetime. What could be more fun, or more rewarding? *P&T*

Richard Newcombe is a well-known collector of high-grade pipes. He has written articles on various pipe brands and pipemakers for such publications as Pipe Friendly, Reason, *and* The Pipe Smoker's Ephemeris.

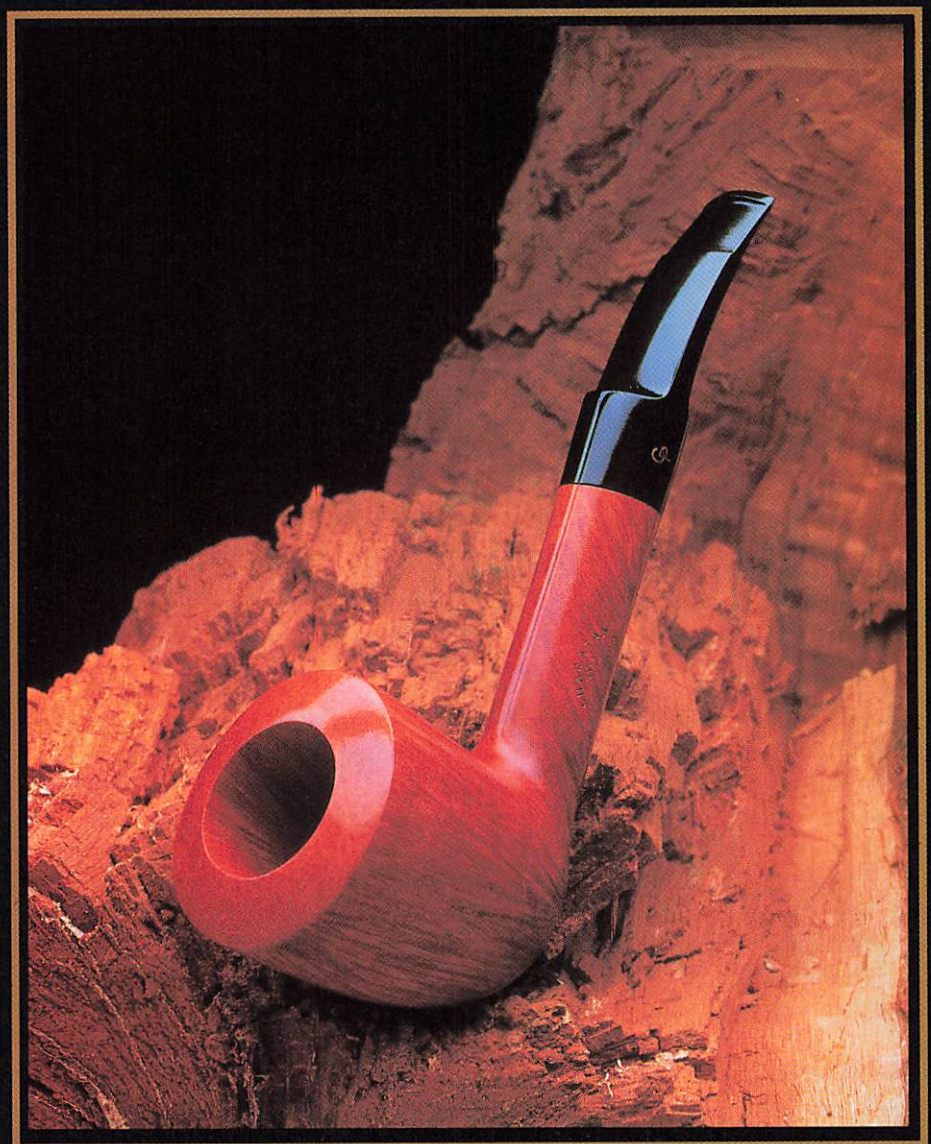
Newcombe's practice is indeed controversial. While some of the foremost pipesmiths in the world agree, many respected pipemakers disagree with him.

Ed Burac, of the Connoisseur Pipe Shop in New York, says that the open air hole is too simple. He takes a more holistic view, maintaining that the pipe is more than the sum of its parts. It is the combination of tobacco chamber, air hole, stem design, and every other part of the pipe that gives it a characteristic smoke.

Jim Cooke, of J.T.&D. Cooke Pipes, is adamantly opposed to an open air hole. "Sure, it'll stay lit longer," he says. "That's because it burns too hot. Look at Barlings: great pipes, very durable, and they have small air holes. The current standard Dunhill is only 3.8 mm." He says he would never guarantee a pipe with an air hole of the size Newcombe proposes.

Randy Wiley, of Wiley Pipes, maintains that a larger air hole will work with a large bowl, but could damage a smaller bowl. "It's a matter of proportion," he says.

The larger air hole may work well for Newcombe because of the shape or size of pipe he typically prefers, or the type of tobacco he smokes, or the way he packs his bowl. He gives excellent advice when he suggests we all experiment to find what is best for us as individuals. *—Chuck Stanion*



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Tobacco Road

There are many important stops between the farm and the blender of your favorite smoking mixture

by Chuck Stanion

In previous issues we have seen how some of our favorite tobaccos are grown, the people who grow them, the traditions and techniques of cultivation, and the tremendous care with which these potent yet fragile plants are harvested. But before we can pack our bowls and light up our favorite mixtures, tobacco must get from the farms to the factories that blend and age and treat the leaves so that we may enjoy them.

This road from farm to factory begins with the tobacco auction, where leaf buyers examine the crops, try to determine their value, quality and potential, and bid appropriately.

There are hundreds of leaf-buying companies across the globe, in virtually every country, but the major leaf companies in the United States, according to Stephen Kuffler, director of leaf and product development for Lane Limited, are DIMON, Universal and Standard Commercial. "Those are the three truly international dealers," says Kuffler. "They operate in virtually every country where tobacco is grown."

Lane Ltd., which manufactures hundreds of pipe tobacco blends—among them Captain Black, possibly the best-selling pipe tobacco in the world—is a huge buyer of tobacco on an international scale. "We do not purchase direct from farmers," says Kuffler. "Certainly with the auction system setup in the United States that is not practical. Except for perique, which has only one producer, in Louisiana. We buy directly from them."

It is more efficient for companies such as Lane to purchase through leaf dealers. Otherwise they would have to maintain large staffs to watch the tobacco markets across the world for the entire season. So the leaf companies purchase tobacco at auction and distribute it to the blending companies. This is not to say, however, that purchasers do not take a firsthand interest. Kuffler often travels directly to the farms to examine and test crops before purchasing tobacco.

Examination is important because a particular tobacco's characteristics may subtly modify according to the conditions of the growing season. Changes can occur in nicotine levels, sugar characteristics, chlorides, leaf color....

"If you have a dry weather crop," says Kuffler, "the leaf has been stressed. Tobacco is very sensitive, and when it's stressed you aren't going to have the same smoking characteristics. Dry weather produces a harsher tobacco. In a wet weather crop it will be more anemic, almost a diluted flavor."

People like Kuffler are among the most courageous in the world: they are willing to pack a bowl with raw tobacco to personally taste its characteristics. "Well, not perique," Kuffler says. Of course, the flavor of raw tobacco is not remotely similar to what consumers will taste. "But with experience," says Kuffler, "you are able to extrapolate what the flavor will be. You can tell at that point exactly what you have, what the tobacco's potential is."

The experienced human palate can be remarkably accurate in gauging tobacco, but even so, chemical analysis is also used to measure nicotine and sugar content. Consistency is of vital importance, and even though certain accommodations can be made to maintain the consistency of a particular blend—even when crop characteristics change from year to year—companies like Lane do all they can to avoid that.

"Because of the volume that we buy," says Kuffler, "and because we always have at least a full year's supply on hand, we can keep the quality and smoking attributes very consistent."

From pressed sheets such as this, tobacco is reconditioned under steam and vacuum to a workable pliability. Only then can it be processed without reducing it to dust and tobacco particles.

But before the tobacco is blended by companies like Lane, it undergoes a number of steps. Even before it is grown, farmers (in the United States) have to determine how much tobacco they are permitted to raise. This is decided on a yearly basis by the federal government, which issues federal tobacco allotments. This quota system helps assure that all the tobacco grown will be sold at auction.

The government notes any surplus and takes it into account before issuing allotments for the following year. Each farmer is permitted only so many acres per year for tobacco, and that acreage is dependent upon how much surplus from the previous year there is, and what predictions there are for consumption. A large surplus from the previous year means a smaller allotment for the farmers.

Once the tobacco is grown and harvested, it doesn't necessarily go immediately to auction. Virginia tobacco, for example, which is grown all over the world, is hung up to dry in heated barns for three to five days, then allowed to regain some moisture content before auction. This process is called flue-curing.

Burley tobacco, as opposed to Virginia, is air-dried for one to two months in open-air barns before auction. Latakia is smoke-cured in closed barns with smoldering wood fires that flavor the tobacco over the course of months. Perique is put in oak barrels under pressure to induce fermentation. (More detailed examinations of these tobaccos are available in previous issues of this magazine.)

But once it gets to auction, tobacco is weighed and put in piles in row after row after row. In the past it was put in hogsheads or large baskets, but now, depending on the individual farmers and auctions, it is simply placed in piles (called sheets) of varying weights—typically 200 pounds or more.

The next step is for federal inspectors to determine the grading for each sheet. Grading differs slightly for different tobaccos, but the Department of Agriculture's grades for flue-cured tobacco is a standard example.

The leaves are divided into groups which include leaves taken from above the midsection of the plant, the midsection, below midsection, bottom of the stalk, variegated, scorched, slick, and mixed leaves. They are then graded within those groups.

There are approximately 150 different grades for tobacco, awarded according to such aspects as leaf maturity, structure, body, color intensity, oil content, uniformity and size.

The bidding takes place with the auctioneer and bidders walking up and down the rows of tobacco, bidding by the pound for the various grades, although, says Randy Tilley, vice president and international processing manager for DIMON International, "Buyers for leaf dealers do not make their purchase decisions based on U.S. government grades but, rather, on an independent visual assessment as to the kind of tobacco necessary to fill an order. At the time of purchase, buyers assign DIMON company grades to each unit purchased."

Every grade of tobacco is put to use, and they are all bought up. Each company has specific needs, stockpiling according to their size. And if a particularly excellent crop is available, "especially for pipe tobaccos," says Kuffler, "we'll buy extra. You usually don't see two consecutive years of an excellent crop, so we'll warehouse it against the possibility of a bad year." So the leaf companies also have to keep that in mind as they do their buying.

Charlie Price, who is president of Tobacco Services Inc., a custom tobacco cutting firm, processes tobacco before it is sold to blenders. He explains that each

sheet of tobacco may be auctioned individually, or, he says, "if a number of piles or rows are from the same farmer, and it all looks the same, all graded the same, they might sell the whole lot at one time. But it actually can be bid pile by pile."

The auction is actually a continuous process, since entire crops are not all ready to be sold at once. "When tobacco is growing in the field," says Price, "it is not all ready to harvest at once. The bottom leaf will turn first and be ready to pull. Then the next leaf on the stalk, and the next." An auction may take place every day or every other day in a location throughout the growing season. "A particular warehouse," says Price, "will have auctions for a couple of months or so."

"The flue-cured tobacco marketing season," says Tilley, "runs from mid-July through mid-November and covers a six-state area: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia." Burley is marketed "from mid-November through mid-February," says Tilley, "in Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia."

Most tobacco processed by leaf dealers for export, says Tilley, "is subjected to a process known as 'pickings.' The procedure involves picking out, by hand or by machine, individual leaves which are not suitable for the particular grade blend being processed. At this point in the processing the tobacco can be moved to the threshing room to mechanically remove the stem or it can bypass the threshing room to be packed as loose leaves. Threshed tobacco is known in the trade as 'strips.' The majority of tobacco processed by DIMON is in strip form."

Row after row of tobacco awaits the auction that will move it a step closer to finished smokability.

The large leaf companies, like Universal and DIMON, have their own stemmeries, and that is where the tobacco goes after being purchased. Some companies don't have their own stemmeries, and they will pay another company for that service.

Moisture must be added before stemming (sometimes called threshing), or the leaves would be torn to pieces. Some companies mist the leaves, others spray them, still others steam them, and some use a combination of these processes.

"Green tobacco," says Tilley, "contains approximately 18 to 25 percent moisture, by weight. The tobacco must be infused with warm moisture to make it supple during handling, then redried to a moisture level of 11 to 12 percent."

Then the tobacco is stored. Before blending, the leaf is allowed to "sweat," in some cases for a year, sometimes two, depending on the leaf and the final plans for that leaf. The term "sweating" actually refers to some loss of moisture in the leaf, but primarily it is an aging process in which fermentation takes place. Virginia tobaccos usually take longer to ferment to an appropriate level because of their high sugar content.

"The storage time," says Price, "is variable because it depends on what you are going to do with the tobacco, what taste you want out of it, whether or not it's going to be blended with a number of other tobaccos. Some of it is used right away. But the aging process never really stops. The characteristics and taste of the tobacco change constantly, whether it ages one day, one week, a month, 10 years—there is constant change. Not drastic change, but it's there. So it's really aged according to your final requirement of it."

Insects like tobacco as much as people do, except, of course, they eat it instead of smoke it, and an important aspect of proper storage is proper fumigation. Obviously no chemicals are used that can impart flavor, and only those substances that are safe for humans are utilized. Climate and weather are determining factors here. Summer is especially conducive to bugs, so that is when fumigation typically takes place. Some companies fumigate the entire warehouse, seal it up and then reopen it in a few days. Some fumigate

"We buy our various grades from our traditional sources" says Stephen Kuffler of Lane Ltd. "Because with pipe tobacco, there is a lot of tradition."

TRADITION.

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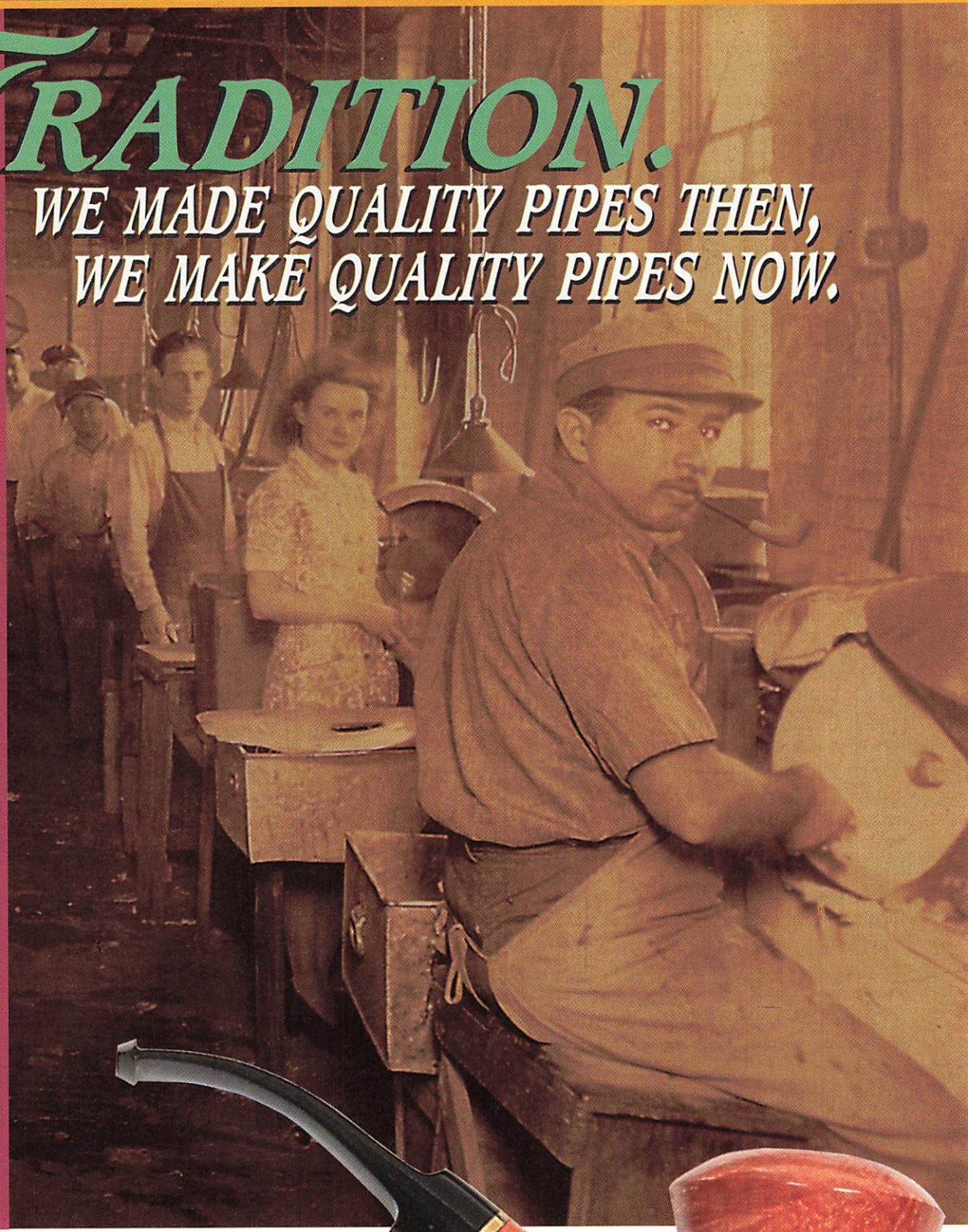

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truckload by truckload. But the tobacco is not unpackaged for this process.

After appropriate aging, the leaf companies sell the tobacco to primary processors like Charlie Price. The condition of the tobacco at this point may be somewhat shocking to the average pipe smoker, and the primary processors put it back in usable condition. It arrives in flat bales, almost completely dried out, brittle, looking more like mottled brick mortar than smokable leaf. But the tobacco is treated in gigantic vacuum chambers that add carefully measured water vapor to bring the leaf back to its proper humidity and texture.

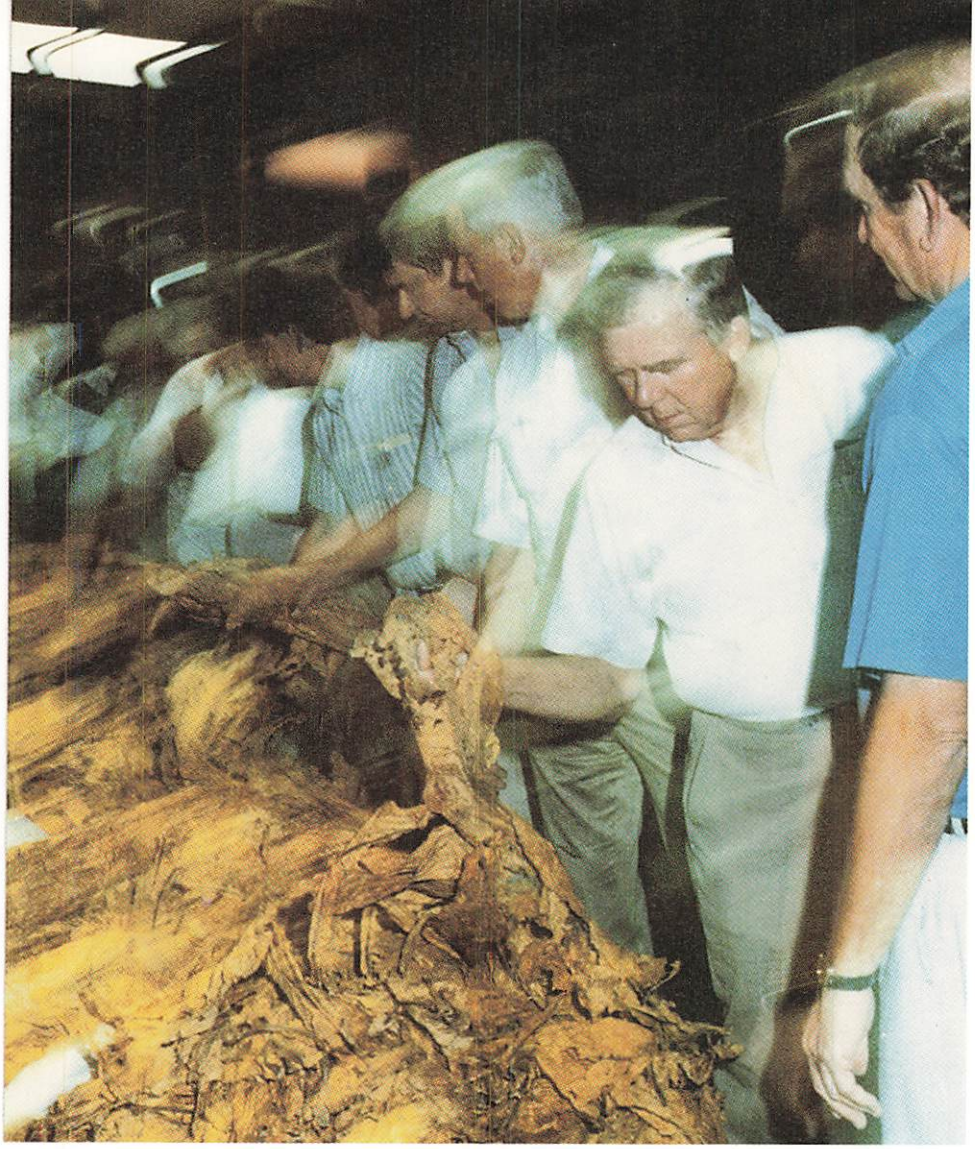
Each primary processor has its own formulas and methods, but basically, says Price, "you have to get a certain amount of heat and a certain amount of moisture to be able to handle it, and so it will be able to absorb the things you spray on it."

How much heat, how much moisture, and what "things" are sprayed on the leaf, are trade secrets, though only casings—flavoring agents—are added, and not to all tobaccos by any means. But all primary processors use vacuum chambers that add steam and heat to the leaf. "When you run it through the vacuum chamber," says Price, "you're looking for a certain temperature. The vacuum needs to be a particular pressure, and then you put the steam into it for an exact moisture content, all for a certain period of time." The specifics are trade secrets, individual to different processors, but everyone has specific recipes for their processing.

After this reconditioning process, the tobacco is again wet down for cutting. It is belt-fed to a cutting head, which has a number of different blades for different cuts. After cutting, it is belt-fed to a tumble dryer, where its moisture content is brought back down to the level that is required by the blending companies that buy it.

Craig Tarler, of Cornell and Diehl Tobacco, is one of these blenders. "The tobacco-cutting company and the blenders" he says, "are really partners—they work hand-in-hand. If I don't get a consistent cut and moisture content from the cutter, my customers are going to call me and let me know about it."

But the way blenders now deal with the product is an involved and fascinating story in itself, and we will start looking into that process in our next issue. *P&T*



A Tobacco Blender's Pharmacopeia

Cornell & Diehl Tobaccos (704.433.1083) offers high quality smoking blends, and Craig Tarler is responsible for the development and blending of its products. As part of our ongoing coverage of tobacco, he offers the following preliminary descriptions of tobaccos commonly found in blends for the pipe smoker.

Burley: A base blending tobacco, burley adds body and fullness to a blend. It can bite a little, but primarily offers a heavier, bolder taste.

Bright Virginia: Adds a sweetness to the overall flavor. Sometimes it is accused of burning hot, but if properly aged, this is not a problem. Generally three or four years are required for it to stop sweating, at which point it is considered properly aged.

Red Virginia: The same qualities as Bright Virginia, but a little heavier, and not as "airy" as Bright Virginia. The general rule-of-thumb is that the lighter the color of the tobacco, the more bite it is likely to produce.

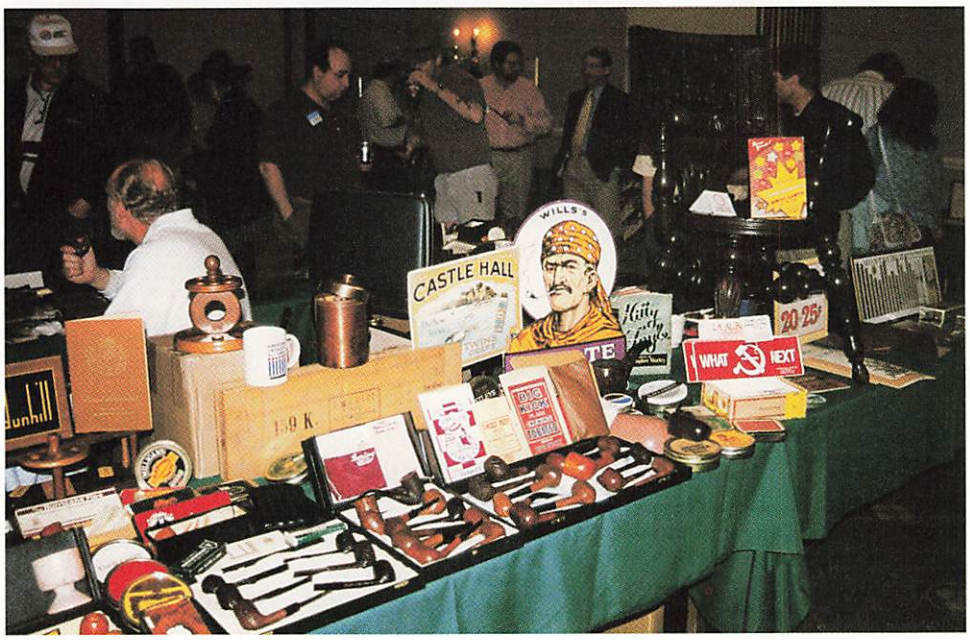
Latakia: There are two types of latakia: Syrian and Cyprian. The production of Syrian latakia is now much less than formerly—the wood used for smoking it is scarce, although there are rumors it will be a more prominent force in the marketplace in the near future. Cyprian latakia adds richness and body. It provides the distinctive aroma that some non-pipe smokers dislike.

Oriental: From many different regions and specialized companies, oriental tobacco is so distinctive as to defy description. But it is essential to some blends, adding that *je ne sais quoi* that rounds out a blend.

Perique: Sometimes called the salt & pepper of tobacco blends, perique has a lemon pepper flavor that spices a blend.

Pipes North and South

Both sides of the Mason-Dixon line are represented by shows of breadth and distinction

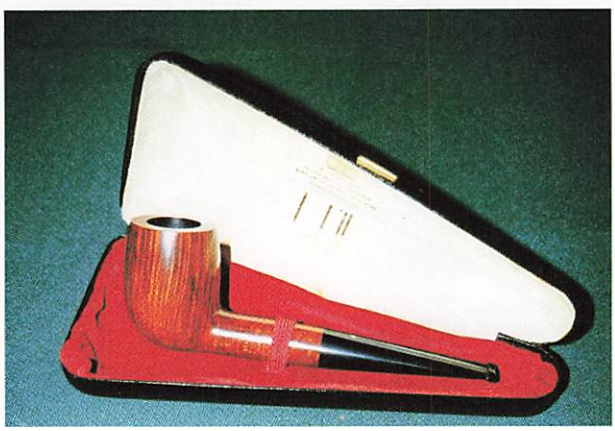


Charlotte Pipe Show

The Deep South Classic is a much-anticipated event every year, and this year's show lived up to the expectations of all the pipe lovers who attended.

This two-day show, which was held the first weekend of May, featured pipes, cigars, tobaccos, antiques and smoking accessories served up with Southern hospitality. Bill Taylor, of Ashton, was also there, demonstrating his craft and answering questions. The pipes he finished at the show were typical Ashtons—that is, astonishing!

It is nice to see retailers taking a regular part in pipe shows. Anthony Cerra, of Cristom Import & Export, brought a wonderful selection of Cristom pipes, pipe tampers and lighters, and cigar humidors. McCranie's Pipe and Tobacco



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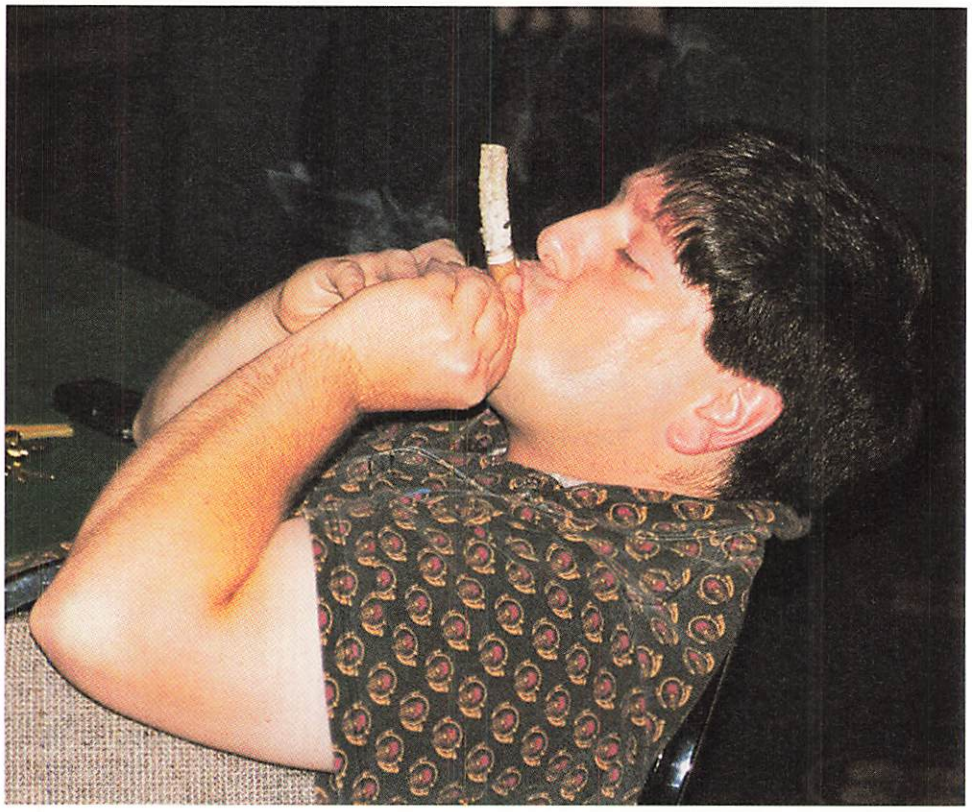
Shop was another large presence; especially stimulating was their selection of Tonino Jacono pipes—beautiful pipes, of which only 600 a year are produced. Sparta Industries featured an incredible selection of Pipa Croce pipes. New Dunhills and Ardors were plentiful, and John B. Hayes Tobacconist had—among many other items—some Ser Jacopo Picta series pipes.

Also present was Mary MacNeil of McClelland Tobacco Company, giving out samples of McClelland's excellent pipe tobaccos. The ballroom was simply full of vendors with fine products too numerous to list.

A pipe-smoking contest and "longest ash" cigar smoking contest helped keep everyone entertained, as well as hourly door prizes. The weekend wrapped up with an auction of donated items that helped fund the show.

Gibb Robinson and the Carolina Briar Friars put on another terrific show. Don't miss next year's!



Chicago Pipe & Cigar Show

With 136 tables of exhibitors, this two-day show (April 19-20) was an unparalleled success.

Held at the Ramada Inn in Harvey, Illinois, just south of Chicago, the show filled the entire ballroom. But even though the room was absolutely packed with displays, the layout was designed for plenty of aisle room.

Unfortunately, 17 prospective exhibitors wanting table space had to be turned down, but all the space not taken up by displays was necessary for the heavy traffic of happy attendees.

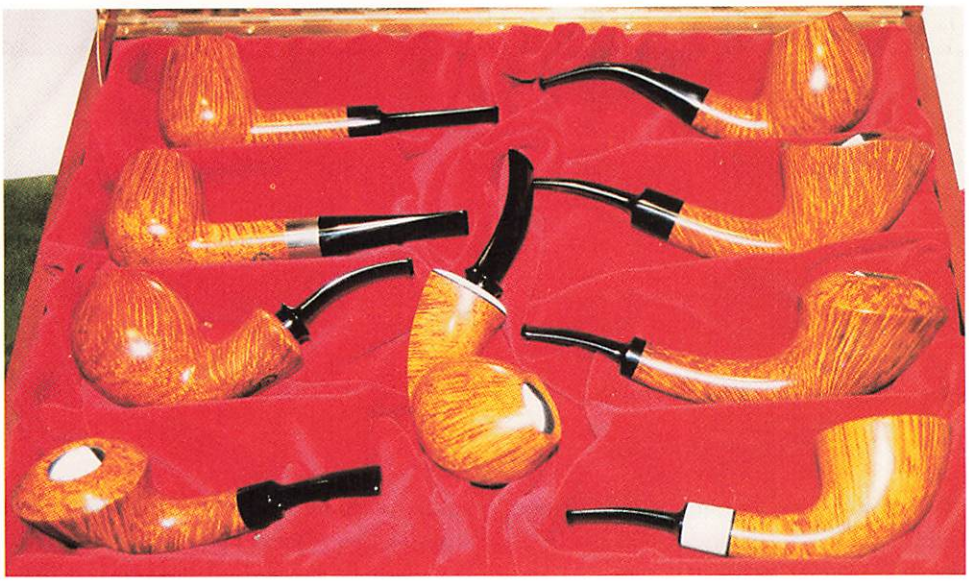
A show that size takes planning, and the Chicagoland Pipe Collectors Club is to be commended on a wonderfully choreographed weekend. From informative talks by Rich Esserman and Mary McNeil to the Saturday night cigar dinner, there were enough activities to keep even the most hyperactive pipe smoker happy.

Especially prominent at the show were the antiques—antique lighters, meerschaums, humidors, pipe cabinets, tampers, literature, tobacco tins—it was a veritable museum of smoking accoutrements. In fact, Dunhill actually brought part of their museum, featuring Dunhill pipes and tobacco jars from the '20s to the present.

New items had a strong presence at the show as well, and many retailers were displaying their products. This was a show with something for everyone.

The hotel was a smoker's delight—the entire property was designated SMOKING WELCOME. Lobby, lounge, restaurant, hallways, bathrooms, everywhere. Even the elevators had soft clouds of latakia and perique hanging just below their ceilings.

"Our biggest problem," says Frank Burla, the show's manager, "was finding a hotel willing to host us. The majority of the hotels in the Chicago area were willing to tolerate a single pipe or cigar during dinner, but could not accept the idea of pipes and cigars going 24 hours a day. A couple of hotels said they'd love to have us,

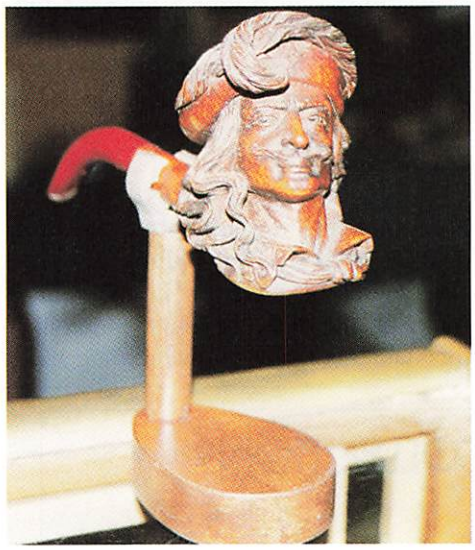


Jess Chonowitsch pipes

but couldn't afford the two or three days it would take to fumigate afterwards."

The Chicagoland Pipe Collectors Club did the legwork and research necessary to find the right location, and it paid off. Though the club has been around for more than 30 years, this was only its second sponsorship of the Chicago show, and it was clear that president Mike Reschke and treasurer Bill Amato, as well as Rex Poggenpohl—who drafted the layout and crafted the award plaques—and Mike Gaffney—who ran the silent auction—all worked their tails off to make it a success. "We all spent some sleepless nights," reports Burla, "sitting up, discussing how to make this thing work."

Besides arranging and running the show and a gourmet cigar dinner, the pipe club paid for 150 breakfasts, 150 lunches, and hors d'oeuvres for 200. They also had security and publicity to worry about. "But we're a nonprofit club," says Burla. "We're just hoping to break even. If we actually make anything, it'll help us get next year rolling." *P&T*



Award Winners:

Best Antiques Display: Stu Sterling
Best Antiques Collection: Federico Baylaender
Best Briar Display: John Loring
Best Briar Collection: Jay Milton

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Central Oklahoma Pipe Enthusiasts (COPE)
A newly formed club for pipe smokers and collectors. For more information, write to COPE, PO Box 7034, Moore, OK 73153-1034; or email *jhaldeman@bix.com.*

Conclave of Richmond Pipe Smokers (CORPS)
Thirteenth Annual Pipe Smokers' Exposition & Celebration, Oct. 10, 11 and 12, in Richmond, Virginia, at the Holiday Inn I-64 & West Broad Street. The theme for this year's exposition is Sherlock Holmes. Also celebrated will be McClelland Tobacco's 20th anniversary and Castello Pipe's 50th anniversary. For more information, call the CORPS pipeline at 804.342.0761, or email *CorPipeSmk@ AOL.com.*

Dallas/Fort Worth Pipe Smokers Club
This club meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month at the Londoner Tavern, 4291 Belt Line Road, Addison, Texas. Contact Ed Price, *epr065@ airmail.net.*

Forty-ninth International Association of Pipe Smokers Clubs Show
One-day event at the St. Louis Holiday Inn, Nov. 8, 1997. Retailers' and collectors' tables, a dinner in the evening and a smoking contest with trophies going to the top five places. For further information, contact Jay Milton at 314.837.5902.

Hungarian Pipe Smokers Association
Budapest, Hungary, will host the International Pipe Smoking Championship Oct. 3 through 5 at the Ludwig Museum of the Royal Palace, Building A. An exhibition featuring companies with smoking-related merchandise, and a gala dinner will also be part of this weekend. For further information contact Geza Kiraly, Hungarian Pipe Smokers Association, World Contacts Bureau, H-1073 Budapest, Dohany u. 57. III/10, Hungary; telephone 36-1-122-1975 or email *biszkup@sunserv.katki.hu.*

New York Pipe Club
Meets the first Tuesday of every month at Muldoon's Pub, 3rd Ave between 43rd and 44th Streets, at 6 p.m. Dues: $2 per meeting. For further information contact S. Jack, 212.288.3832.

The North American Society of Pipe Collectors
Newly christened, the NASPC was formerly the Ohio Pipe Collectors. There are 150 members in 23 states and Canada. Annual show this Sept. 27 at the Holiday Inn, 328 W. Lane Ave., Columbus, Ohio. For more information or a complimentary newsletter (and it's a terrific newsletter), contact Bill Unger at 614.252.2904 or email *ohio@pipes.org.*

To have your club listed in *P&T*, please send pertinent information to *Pipes and tobaccos*, 3000 Highwoods Blvd., Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27604-1029.

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Philadelphia Pipe Club
Meets the third Wednesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at Chris' Jazz Cafe, 1421 Swansom St.

Sherlock Holmes Pipe Club
Meets every second Wednesday at the Holiday Inn, Mansfield, Massachusetts. For further information contact Steve Smith, *fourdots@aol.com*.

South Florida Briar Brotherhood
Meeting locations vary, but are scheduled for the third Thursday of every month in Coral Springs, Florida. SFBB's newsletter, *Smoke Signals*, is an informative, entertaining publication. The last issue featured a how-to article on blowing smoke rings, and a piece by pipemaker Mark Tinsky on the relationship between grain and smoking quality in pipes. You can subscribe by sending a check for $7 payable to Ed Faerman at *Smoke Signals*, 3606 NW 84th Ave., Suite 100, Coral Springs, FL 33065.

Tampa Bay Pipe Club
Meeting days vary but are held during the last week of each month, after store hours at The Tobacconist, 119 Bullard Parkway, Temple Terrace, FL 33617. For further information, contact John Sabia at 813.989.3133.

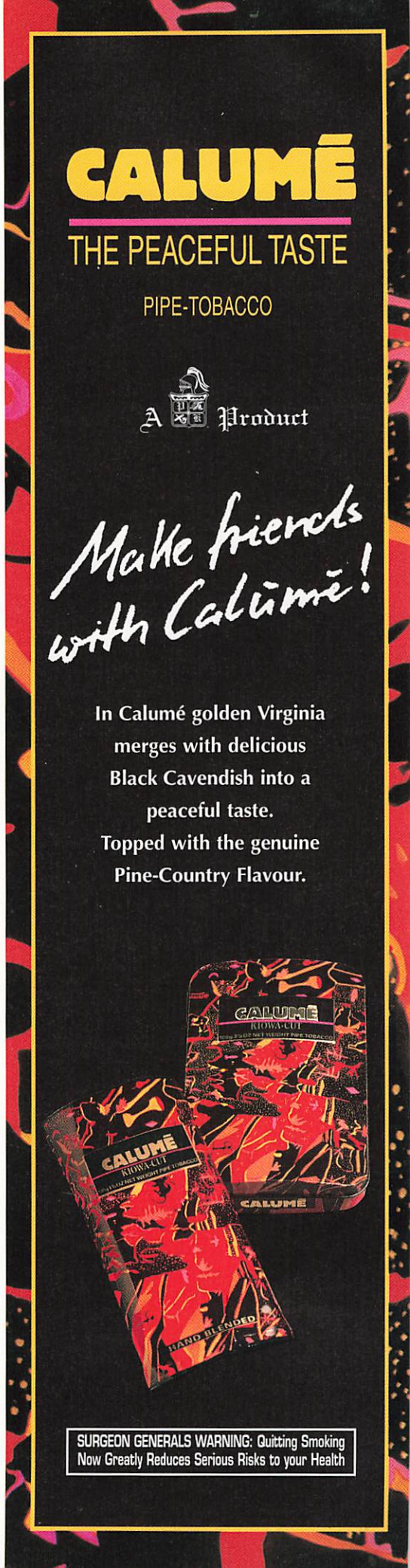
Triangle Area Pipe Smokers (TAPS)
Monthly meetings at the Holiday Inn-Crabtree in Raleigh, North Carolina. For further information, call Chuck Stanion, 919.872.5040, or fax 919.876.6531.

The Universal Coterie of Pipe Smokers (TUCOPS)
If you were stranded on a deserted island and your mail carrier allowed you only one subscription other than *Pipes and tobaccos*, it would have to be *The Pipe Smoker's Ephemeris*, which averages around 75 pages and is the virtual meeting place for members of the Coterie. Now in its 33rd year, and supported by contributions from appreciative readers, *The Ephemeris* is stuffed with letters, articles, Sherlockiana, and reports on everything pipe-related. You may obtain a subscription form by writing to Tom Dunn, 20-37 120th Street, College Point, NY 11356.

#pipes
An online, real-time discussion group available anytime, but most active after 9:00 p.m. EST. Conversations range from tobacco to retailers to pipe preferences to the weather, and it is readily available to anyone in the world with internet access. You will need a shareware program called mIRC, available by going to *http://www.mirc.co.uk*. Instructions for downloading the program are at this site. (Mac users may need to find a Mac shareware site). Configure mIRC by clicking FILE and SETUP. Click on a DALnet server. When you get a connection, a window will open. Type in *#pipes. (Sorry but* P&T *can't help you get started.)*

Southwest Pipe & Cigar League
1997 West Coast Pipe & Cigar Expo, November 22-23 at the West Coast Anaheim Hotel, 1855 South Harbor Blvd., Anaheim, California. For room reservations call 714.750.1811 and mention the Expo to receive a hotel room discount. Cigar and Pipe smoking contests, silent auction, a banquet and guest speakers promise to make this show exciting. For more information call Steve Johnson at 310.398.8798, or email musiker@leonardo.net.

Wisconsin Briar Friars
Pipe and cigar smokers club. Contact Mark Herman, 1613 N. Peach, Marshfield, WI 54449.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